

VISIT...

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

THE
UNSEALED PROPHECY.

LECTURES

ON THE

REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

BY

ROBERT SKEEL



"SEAL NOT THE SAYINGS OF THE PROPHECY OF THIS BOOK, FOR THE
TIME IS AT HAND."—REV. XXII. 10.

"THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE REVEALED BELONG UNTO US AND TO OUR
CHILDREN FOR EVER."—DEUT. XXIX. 29.

LONDON:

GEORGE BERGER, HOLYWELL STREET, STRAND.

1857.

100. g. 223.

COLOMBO:—PRINTED BY WILLIAM SKEEN.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Lectures were delivered in the Moravian Chapel, Fetter Lane, London, during the year 1853, at the request of several kind and valued friends,—members, like myself, of the congregation assembling there.

When I began to prepare them for delivery, I had not seen the Rev. E. B. Elliott's *Horæ Apocalypticæ*; but from the subsequent perusal of that learned and instructive work, I have derived much valuable information, which I here thankfully acknowledge. I have, however, differed from the gifted author on many points, of more or less importance. I may refer particularly to the opinions I have expressed regarding the stability of the Turkish empire, and the results of the war in the East, because of their special interest in the present day.

The extraordinary revolutions and combinations that have taken place around us, lead to the conclusion, that the time is at hand when those predictions will be accomplished which intimate the universal spread of the Gospel, and the final overthrow of every Antichristian power. It is the duty and the privilege of Christians to watch the signs of coming judgments; and to seek with earnestness to understand what has been declared by the prophets in visions and symbols, concerning events which are yet future. A blessing is promised to those who read the Apocalypse; and we may believe

that it will become clearer and more perspicuous, to the sincere inquirer, as the end draws near.

It was not my intention to publish these Lectures; but a dear relative, in a distant land, to whom the original manuscript was sent for private perusal, resolved to print them on his own responsibility. He kindly transmitted the proof-sheets as they were passing through the press, accompanied by many valuable suggestions, and thus enabled me to add a few additional notes, and make several corrections.

These Lectures, which had their origin in conversations and correspondence with members of my own family, are the result of much research and patient study, carried on, however, rather as an evening recreation than as a task, after the wearying mental and manual labours of the day were ended. The verses appended to each Lecture, are taken, with one or two exceptions, from the extensive and admirable collection of Hymns used in the Church of the United Brethren.

My great desire, in the preparation and delivery of the Lectures, was to render more simple and clear a portion of the Holy Scriptures which is confessedly involved and obscure. I trust I have succeeded in my object—but to what extent, I must leave to the judgment of the candid and intelligent reader.

London,
March 25th, 1856.

R. SKEEN.

CONTENTS.

LECTURE I.

	PAGE.
Introductory.—The Seven Stars.—Revelation, ch. i.	1

LECTURE II.

The Epistles to the Seven Churches.—The Court of Heaven.—The Four Living Creatures.—The Opening of the Sealed Book,—ch. ii.—vi. 1—4.	13
--	----

LECTURE III.

Opening of the Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Seals.—Sealing of the 144,000.—Omission of the Tribe of Dan.—ch. vi. 5 : vii. 1—8.	29
---	----

LECTURE IV.

The White-robed Multitude.—Opening of the Seventh Seal.—Silence in Heaven.—The Incense-bearing Angel.—The Seven Trumpets.—The First Angel sounds.—ch. vii. 9—17 : viii. 1—7.	47
--	----

LECTURE V.

The sounding of the Second, Third, and Fourth Trumpets.—Genseric the Vandal.—Attila the Hun.—The Barbarians in Italy.—Odoacer.—Theodoric.—Proclamation of coming Woes.—Forebodings in the Church.—Pope Gregory I.—The coming of Antichrist.—ch. viii. 8—13.	63
---	----

LECTURE VI.

The sounding of the Fifth Trumpet.—Explanation of Symbols.—Mohammed.—His Doctrines.—His Locust-like Followers.—Their Power and Progress.—The Christian Idolaters.—ch. ix. 1—12.	77
---	----

LECTURE VII.

	PAGE.
The Second Woe.—The Dark Ages.—Horns of the Golden Altar.— Loosing of the Four Angels.—The Turkish Horsemen.—Duration of their Mission.—Fall of the Greek Empire.—Its effects on Western Christendom.—ch. ix. 12—19.	95

LECTURE VIII.

State of Christendom.—The Bohemian Brethren.—The Angel clothed with a Cloud.—The little Book.—Hildebrand and the Bohe- mians.—Wickliff.—John Huss.—Invention of Printing.—Trans- lations of the Scriptures.—Luther and the Reformation.—Its effects in Germany and England.—The Seven Thunders.—The Oath of the Angel.—The Preaching of the Gospel.—ch. x.	111
---	-----

LECTURE IX.

The Measuring of the Temple.—The Gentile Court.—The Period of 1260 days.—Spread of Arianism.—The Two Witnesses.— ch. xi. 1—7.	127
---	-----

LECTURE X.

The War of the Beast against the Witnesses.—Their Death.—Their Resurrection.—Their Ascension.—The Earthquake.—Fall of the Tenth part of the City.—The Seven Chiliads.—Fear of the Remnant.—Glory given to God.—ch. xi. 7—13.	147
---	-----

LECTURE XI.

The Commencement of the Third Woe.—Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet.—ch. xi. 14—19.	
External and Internal Writing of the Seven-sealed Book.—Sketch of the succeeding Visions.	169

LECTURE XII.

The Church in the Fourth century.—Persecution.—The great Red Dragon.—The Man-child.—Satan cast out of Heaven.—The Flood from the Serpent's mouth.—Flight of the Woman into the Wilderness.—ch. xii.	185
--	-----

LECTURE XIII.

The Beast from the Sea.—Wretched condition of the Roman Empire :	
--	--

its Revival under Gregory the Great.—The Two-horned Lamb-like Beast.—Origin, Power, and Duration of the Papacy.—The Image of the Beast.—Coronation of Charlemagne by Pope Leo III.—His Empire resembled the Old Roman—but subject to the Popes.—ch. xiii.	201
---	-----

LECTURE XIV.

The Image of the Beast.—Its religious Aspect.—The Mark of the Beast.—Its Name.—Its Number.—The Latin Empire.—The Papacy.—Daniel's little Horn.—The Mouth of the Beast.—Duration of its power.—Deceit and Blasphemy.—Lying Wonders.—The System of Popery.—ch. xiii.	219
--	-----

LECTURE XV.

The Vision of the 144,000 on Mount Sion—typical of the Redeemed on earth.—Source of their joy.—The Father's Name on their foreheads.—Freedom from idolatry—their faultlessness.—The new Song.—Vision of the Flying Angel.—Spread of the Gospel.—Fall of Babylon.—Punishment of Image-worshippers.—Blessedness of the Dead which die in the Lord.—Vision of the Sickle-bearers.—Reaping of the Earth.—Treading of the Wine-press.—ch. xiv.	243
---	-----

LECTURE XVI.

The Seven Vials.—The Harpers on the Glassy Sea.—Their Song.—Preparation of the Seven Angels.—The Temple filled with Smoke.—The First Vial poured out on the Earth.—The Second on the Sea.—ch. xv. . xvi. 1—3.	265
---	-----

LECTURE XVII.

The Pouring out of the Third Vial: the Thirty years' War.—The Fourth Vial: the Wars of Louis XIV.—The Fifth Vial: the French Revolution.—ch. xvi. 4—11.	285
---	-----

LECTURE XVIII.

Remarks on the Periods of the first five Vials.—The Sixth Vial.—Drying up of the Euphrates, not the overthrow of Turkey.—Removal of Obstructions to the Progress of the Gospel in the East, among Mohammedans, Hindoos, Chinese, &c.—The Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs: Infidelity, Despotism, Superstition.—	
--	--

	PAGE.
The Gathering of the Armies.—Armageddon.—The Warning.— ch. xvi. 12—16.	301

LECTURE XIX.

The Seventh Vial.—The Overthrow of Satan's kingdom.—Disturbance in the Political atmosphere.—National convulsions.—Division of the Great City.—The Plague of Hail.—Judgment of Babylon.—Her description.—Mystery of the Woman: distinct from the Beast.—The Seven Heads.—The Eighth Head.—The Ten Horns.—Overthrow of the Papacy.—xvi. 17—21: xvii. 1—18.	323
---	-----

LECTURE XX.

The Judgment of Babylon the Great.—“Come out of her.”—Lamentation and rejoicing over her.—The Blood of the Saints.—Triumph of the Church.—Oneness of Jews and Gentiles.—St. John and the Angel.—Vision of the Faithful and True.—The War against Him and his Followers.—Destruction of the Beast, the False Prophet, and their Armies.—ch. xviii. xix.	347
--	-----

LECTURE XXI.

The Binding of Satan.—The First Resurrection.—The Millennium.—The Reign of Christ and the Saints.—The Condition of the Earth and its Inhabitants.—State of the Church.—Restoration of the Jews.—ch. xx. 1—6.	369
--	-----

LECTURE XXII.

Millennial Blessedness.—The “Living Waters.”—Privileges of the Jews.—Longevity of Man.—Satan loosed from his Prison.—Deceives the nations.—Gog and Magog—utterly destroyed.—The Devil cast into the Lake of Fire.—Second Coming of Christ and the General Judgment.—ch. xx. 7—15.	391
---	-----

LECTURE XXIII.

No more Sea.—New Heaven and New Earth.—The New Jerusalem.—Blessedness of the Righteous.—The Time is at hand.—Conclusion.—ch. xxi. xxii.	409
---	-----

LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY.—THE SEVEN STARS.—REVELATION I.

In commencing a series of Lectures on the Book of Revelation, I feel that I owe an apology to several of my Brethren and Sisters for what may appear to them presumption or self-conceit. In the first place, though not ordained "to labour in the word and doctrine," I have not thrust myself into this seat, I have been *called* to occupy it;—and secondly, I consider it the duty of every Christian to edify the Church, according as the Lord gives him ability and opportunity. For this opinion there is sufficient warrant in the New Testament. Some have the power of ministering to the wants of the poor and needy, others are endowed with special gifts for warning, exhorting, and encouraging their brethren; others again, have singular wisdom for instructing the young and the ignorant, and training them in the path of holiness. There are diversities of gifts and diversities of operations, but it is the same Spirit and the same God which worketh all in all.

The most sublime and glorious predictions of the Apocalypse are now, I believe, about to be fulfilled—fulfilled even during the lifetime of some now present. Let me not then be thought presumptuous, if I attempt to throw some light, however feeble it may be, upon a portion of Holy Scripture, confessedly obscure, but yet given for the edification, for the warning, and for the encouragement of the Church.

It has so happened, in the course of God's Providence, that I have had opportunities of studying the book of Revelation beyond many my equals—deriving help even from Roman Catholic writers—and have formed for myself an outline of interpretation, which I

trust has this merit (which I would humbly ascribe to the Giver of every good and perfect gift), that there is no jarring of one portion with another—that figures are not distorted to suit circumstances, nor divers meanings attached to similiar symbols. The knowledge I have gained, I am now ready to communicate; for the man who labours to acquire knowledge without imparting it, spends his time to little purpose. But knowledge is indeed a talent, for the use of which each one must give an account; and when I was requested to occupy this seat, it was no proud spirit, but the shadow of the wicked and slothful servant who buried his talent in the earth, that urged me to consent.

That it is the privilege as well as the duty of every one who fears God to *search the Scriptures*, no one will deny; but yet from the conduct of many it may be inferred, that they think lightly of the duty, and make little use of the privilege. Of many more it may be asserted as a fact, that they consider the Apocalypse to be a sealed book—the words of which may be read, but convey no meaning. And yet it is “the Revelation of Jesus Christ, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;” and concerning which it is added—“Blessed is he that readeth, and they which hear the words of this prophecy.”

We have indeed been often warned from the pulpit against making the book of Revelation the subject of our study,—and several reasons have been assigned in justification of its neglect; such as the obscurity of the book—the opinion that it was never designed to be understood until the whole was fulfilled—the many contradictory and incongruous interpretations put forth by learned men—and the example of the Jews, who in attempting to explain the Old Testament prophecies regarding the first appearing of the Messiah, fell into grievous error. But we ought not to suffer such things to discourage us. The mistakes of the Christian, or the errors of the Jewish expositors, we should hail as *beacons* to guide us on our course; not fear them as rocks on which we may be wrecked. The great majority of the Jews indeed understood not the spiritual nature of the Messiah's kingdom; but their interpre-

tation, so far as it went, was correct. They knew the time and the place of his birth; and the glory that will eventually attend his kingdom, in which their nation will largely share. But they overlooked the predictions which pointed to his humble birth, and his holy life—to his bitter sufferings, and his ignominious death. It was not until after his resurrection that the disciples themselves understood, that it was necessary “Christ should first suffer these things and then enter into his glory.” Yet there were some among the Jews who *did* understand the prophecies. Those among them who were waiting for the salvation of Israel—and unto whom it was *revealed*—when they, like the prophets of old, searched what or what manner of time the “Spirit of Christ did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow.” We can easily read the Law in the light of the Gospel. But the meaning of many of the types and figures and prophecies of the old dispensation must have been as difficult of interpretation to the Jews as the book of Revelation is now to us,—and many must have been ready to exclaim with the Ethiopian eunuch, when asked, Understandest thou what thou readest? “How can I, except some man should guide me!” But their obscurity was no excuse for their neglect. The Israelites were commanded to meditate in the law day and night; they were to teach the words of God diligently unto their children, and to talk of them when they sat in the house, and when they walked by the way, when they lay down, and when they rose up. Such was the practice of David, and doubtless of many others—they meditated on the words of the Lord, and He gave them understanding. “Thy testimonies are wonderful,” says the Psalmist—“but the entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.”

Look at the example of Daniel, who understood by books that the Lord would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem;—and he set himself “to seek by prayer and supplication that the Lord would cause his face to shine upon the sanctuary that lay desolate.” And the Lord sent his angel while he was yet speaking, to give him skill and understanding; and then made

known to him the very time of the coming of Messiah the Prince, who should make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in an everlasting righteousness, and seal up the vision and prophecy. But several predictions of Daniel and other Old Testament writers terminate not with the History of the Jewish Church—they point onward to the times of the Gospel dispensation, and shadow forth successive events until the final consummation of all things.

These later prophecies are nearly all embodied in the Revelation of St. John. So are also those of our Saviour, in which he foretold the sufferings of his people,—and those of St. Paul, wherein he predicted the coming, the power, and the destruction of Antichrist.

The great subject of the Apocalypse, indeed, is the struggle of the Church with this great enemy of God and man. It is described in sublime though often mysterious language. Symbols the most striking, and figures the most extraordinary that were ever employed in conveying ideas to the human mind, are found in every page; and it has not yet fallen to the lot of any single commentator to give a consistent explanation of the whole—to illustrate each vision by the light of corresponding events—so that there shall be a perception of *Harmony* between the symbolized Prophecy and the explanatory History—*Harmony* throughout the order of events—*Harmony* among all the parts of the Apocalypse—*Harmony* between the interpretation of the book and the requirements of common sense—or rather the requirements of *truth*—(for *common sense* is only the right apprehension and proper application of truth.)

Thus one class of commentators refer the fulfilment of the Apocalypse to days that are still future—as if the *end* of the Gospel dispensation only demanded a special revelation, and all the intervening period, from the visions in Patmos to the present day, were unworthy of prophetic reference. If indeed the Church had continued flourishing, pure, triumphant, it might be accounted for; but the reverse of this is the truth. The History of Christianity exhibits scenes of suffering, corruption, and persecution; she has been driven into the wilderness; her witnesses have been silenced; her spirit was well-nigh extinguished.

Another class of commentators suppose that the visions from the 1st chapter to the beginning of the 20th, were all fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of the persecuting Emperor Nero. But, besides the objection that we have thus 1800 years without a reference, and during a period when the saints in an especial manner required support for their faith and patience; this interpretation takes for its basis the fable of Nero's escape from his assassins, his flight to the Euphrates, and subsequent return to Rome. As if the Holy Spirit of God would dictate a prophecy in support of a falsehood, and thus give currency to a superstitious rumour.

Both of these classes object to what is called the *year-day principle*; that is, expounding each day in the Apocalypse to mean a year; but that this principle is the true one, has been established beyond any reasonable doubt,—and commends itself to every attentive reader of Scripture. Indeed, in the prophecies of Ezekiel we find that a day is declared to be put for a year. "I have appointed thee, saith the Lord, each day for a year." And the seventy weeks of Daniel certainly referred to a period of 490 years.

Among the commentators who adopt this principle, there is to be found great diversity in the explanation of the various symbols, and much disagreement in the adaptation of historical events to the different visions; consequently, great want of harmony and unity of design in the interpretation is apparent throughout. But of late years the light thrown on the Apocalyptic page has grown clearer and stronger. And one commentary, lately published, is distinguished above all others for its laborious research, its wonderful development of mysterious symbols, and its lucid adaptation of historic facts, as well as its bold maintenance of Gospel truth, and its simple and sincere piety. This work, the *Horæ Apocalyptice* of the Rev. Mr. Elliott, I have read with great profit as well as pleasure. I had, however, commenced the study of the book of Revelation long before I met with it; and I hope I may be permitted to say, that in several points, I believe the learned author is mistaken. This I shall endeavour to shew in the proper place.

But it is said by many,—“Of what use is a commentary on a book so obscure that the most learned men disagree in its interpretation? God will doubtless make it clear when the predictions are accomplished.”—No doubt it will be so. But commentaries are to be used as helps in understanding our Master’s will—even as sermons are useful in stirring us up by way of remembrance. And our Lord, according to His promise, hath sent the Spirit from on high “to shew unto his people things to come:”—and each individual member is exhorted not only to grow in *grace* but also in the *knowledge* of our Lord Jesus Christ;—the *knowledge* of the things which he has made known through his Apostles, concerning himself as the *Head over all things* to the Church, as well as the knowledge which we must have of him as the Saviour of sinners. And St. Peter exhorts believers to be mindful of the words spoken before by holy prophets and apostles of the Lord, concerning the *last days*,—reminding them of certain events which should then take place,—and admonishes them to *look* for, that is, earnestly expect, and eagerly scrutinize the *signs* of the coming of the day of God. He refers them also to the Epistles of St. Paul, wherein there were things hard to be understood—but which he evidently believes those to whom he was writing were able to comprehend. St. Paul certainly says many hard things, which he himself admits, when addressing the Hebrews on the Priesthood of Melchisedec; but he adds, “*Ye are dull* of hearing; for when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God;”—admonishing them to “leave the first principles, and go on unto perfection; *not to be slothful*, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

God has given us a wonderful revelation from heaven, which it is our duty diligently to examine. He has promised a blessing to him that readeth and to those who hear;—that is, carefully, attentively, prayerfully; making use of all the helps that the works of nature, and the history of nations can afford. And should we not seek to obtain this blessing? Surely, if we were desirous we could

not fail. We should derive satisfaction and enjoyment in the very act of watching and listening. These are blessings well understood by those who wait with warm hearts and expanded affections for good news from a far country. Like the colonists in New Zealand, who day after day, for weeks together, look up to the *Telegraph*, for signs of a mail from the mother country, their watching and waiting exercise their faith and patience. At length a ball suddenly appears on one of its outstretched arms, telling that a sail is seen on the distant horizon. The whole colony is interested—all are in eager expectation. Soon another signal intimates the character of the vessel. Then a flag is hoisted on the *Telegraph*, but only the initiated know its import; the few who have *signal-books* communicate the intelligence to others; and the joyful news flies through the little community—that the ship in the offing is direct from England. The colonists line the shore; and the mail is landed. All now are in joyful anticipation of heart-cheering news from beloved relatives on the other side of the globe. The office is soon surrounded by an expectant crowd, and many a rush and struggle betokens their heart-felt interest and feverish anxiety and fervent affection. But some may say—"Why give themselves so much trouble?—the letters would all be delivered in good time, if they would only be patient." Doubtless they would. But patience had already been exercised, until hope deferred had almost made the heart sick.—And he who could be calm or indifferent under such circumstances, must have a cold heart and deadened affections,—from which may God ever preserve me and mine!

But does not this somewhat resemble our conduct with regard to the communications which God has made to men respecting the future destinies of the Church and the world? We *know* that changes will come—we *believe* that the kingdom of righteousness and peace will be established on the earth, and every enemy of God and man be subdued or destroyed. But we seem to say—"these things will happen in God's appointed time—they do not concern our personal salvation—and need not occupy our thoughts." If such indifference is justifiable, for what purpose has God, by his

Spirit, withdrawn the veil from the future? As affectionate children, our heavenly Father expects us to take a lively interest in all things which may affect the present or future welfare of the household of faith. Our Lord gave his disciples a sign by which they might know when to flee from the impending destruction of Jerusalem; and He also upbraided the Jews, because, though skilful in discerning the coming changes of the weather, they were unable to discern the signs of the times; and so judgment at last came upon them unaware. Is it less *our* duty to discern the signs of the times in which *we* live?—Signs in the political and in the religious world, of greater import than any that have appeared since Luther raised the banner of the Reformation!

For, as if elevated on a *Prophetic Telegraph*, we see the fate of Turkey signalled in its tolerating spirit and intestine troubles. We see again another sign in the immense armies now marshalled on the continent of Europe—such as never before existed in the world, even in times of war. A third signal points to the revival of the French Empire, as suggestive of the leadership and employment of those mighty armies. A fourth is the wonderful discovery of Australian gold,—now finding its way in a continuous stream into the coffers of England, as if to supply her with the sinews of war in the last decisive conflict with the powers of Antichrist. Above all *these*, the eye of faith may discern two flags of divers import flying on the prophetic Telegraph; and on turning to the *signal-book* of Revelation, we find the explanation. One is a voice to the dwellers in Babylon—"Come out of her, my people, that ye receive not of her plagues:"—the other is a warning to us, "Behold I come as a thief; blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."

The great object of these Lectures is, that we may *understand* more clearly the purposes of God, which he has revealed in shadows and figures, concerning the time of the end; that we may be led to take a deeper *interest* in the things "noted in the scripture of truth;" that we may watch more vigilantly against temptation, and pray more earnestly for strength and wisdom. For if we, like Daniel,

set our hearts to understand the words of God, we shall, like him, be *made* "*to understand* what shall befall the people in the latter days;"—and let us remember what is added, "none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."

We may well believe that similar to the occupation of the prophet Daniel was that of St. John in the isle of Patmos, when we read he was *in the Spirit* on the Lord's day; meditating on the things which God had already revealed—on the words of his divine Master, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." He was now experiencing in his own person the truth of the first part of this declaration, having been banished by the Emperor Domitian to the rocky islet off the coast of Asia Minor,—“for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.” No doubt he was in spirit looking forward to the day of deliverance,—for the Church rather than for himself. Cruel persecution was now trying the patience and thinning the ranks of the servants of God. The world indeed had well-nigh overcome the Church. Encouragement was therefore needed, and it was sent, though accompanied with warnings and rebukes. For the enemy had corrupted the Church within, as well as assailed her without.

Jesus himself, the Prince of the kings of the earth, appeared to the beloved disciple, commanding him to write what he saw in a book, and send it to the Seven Churches. "Write," said our Lord, "the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter."

These things were not designed for the exclusive benefit of the *seven* Churches of Asia, for we know there were many others at that time established in the world—they were intended for all—for each individual believer. "*He that hath an ear*, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches."

The description which St. John gives of our Lord's appearance, the effect it had upon him, and the encouraging words with which he was addressed, are remarkably similar to the vision described by Daniel (ch. x.), which he saw by the river Hiddekel. And in

c

that vision to Daniel was foreshewn the history not of the Jews only, but of several of the neighbouring nations. Even so to St. John was shewn not merely the trials and final triumph of the Church, but the position and the plagues and the ultimate destruction of the enemies by whom she is surrounded.

Before our Lord's ascension, the beloved disciple had heard the wonderful and cheering declaration, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;"—and now, in the isle of Patmos, the same Jesus comforts and strengthens his servant, reminding him of his dying love, and of the almighty power with which he is invested. "Fear not;" he says, "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and *have the keys of hell and of death.*" Well may the Church therefore trust the promise, that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it:"—and his servants rely on Him who said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." But, as if to indicate also the holiness he requires in his people, and the necessity of constant watchfulness and prayer—"the First and the Last," whose "feet are like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace," appears to John as walking "in the midst of the churches," which he himself tells us are symbolized by the "seven golden candlesticks." It is thus the Son of Man has ever been with his church—though too often the solemn import of this vision has been forgotten, and idol worship and evil passions have been introduced and fostered, as if he "whose eyes are as a flame of fire" saw not or disregarded.

The *seven stars* in the hand of Jesus are said to be the angels of the Churches; that is, the *messengers*, as we find the word translated in many passages, and which indeed is its proper meaning. This leads us to infer, that these angels or messengers were a *deputation* from the seven Churches of Ephesus, &c., on the opposite coast of Asia Minor, from which Patmos was not far distant. The Churches are named according to their position with regard to Patmos, Ephesus being the nearest. It is highly probable that such messengers were sent from time to time to minister to the wants of the Apos-

tle in that barren island, and also to seek his advice in such cases of difficulty or of heresy as might arise in the bosom of the Church. Doubtless these messengers ranked among the bishops or deacons in their respective Churches, and esteemed it a high honour to be employed in this labour of love. That all the seven were present at this time with St. John is very probable, both from the way in which they are mentioned, and the circumstances attending the voyage to the island. It must have been a matter of forethought and arrangement; there was little intercourse between Patmos and the main-land; but by assembling at Ephesus, the nearest port, it would not be difficult to hire a small vessel for their special use. Their designation as stars in the Lord's right hand indicates their *representative character*; representative indeed, not merely of the seven Churches, but of the Church universal on the earth. For we know from our Lord's declaration, that each sheep of his flock is safe under his protection, "neither shall any pluck them out of his hand."

Several questions connected with the *authorship*, the *date*, and the *canonicity* of the Apocalypse, have produced great controversy among learned men in various ages of the Church. These it is needless to refer to. It seems to me to be satisfactorily settled, that St. John the Apostle and beloved disciple of our Lord wrote the Apocalypse, not in the reign of Nero, but in the reign of the Emperor Domitian, and about fifteen years after the destruction of Jerusalem. Its inspiration is acknowledged by the Church, which has granted it a place among the sacred books, since the earliest ages—and is now disputed by none, except a few German divines, who claim for it a high character as a mere *literary production*, but are unwilling to admit that it was written at the command of Jesus Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The practical object of the book,—the end sought for, as distinct from its prophetic character,—was to encourage, console, and admonish Christians suffering under bitter and bloody persecution, and sorely tempted to apostatize and act a timid and doubting part. This is stamped in every page of the Book. From the be-

ginning to the end, all is filled with promise and encouragement to those who are engaged in arduous and bloody strife. The Tree of life,—the Paradise of God,—a Crown of glory,—royal and priestly elevation and honour,—exemption from the second death,—a place and citizenship in the New Jerusalem,—white raiment, even the costume of heaven,—the external presence of God,—exemption from hunger and thirst, and cold and heat, and sickness and mourning,—the perpetual care of the Great Shepherd, who shall feed his sheep in safety, and lead them to fountains of living water,—eternal rest from all trials and struggles,—rest in that world where they need neither sun nor moon, because the glory of the Lord lightens it, and the Lamb is its splendour;—these and the like are the objects of promise to the faithful combatant in the army of martyrs which are everywhere found in the Apocalypse. The theme of the whole book is the certain triumph of Christianity over all its enemies—and the glorious consummation of the struggle with the powers of darkness.

“Then let us follow Christ our Lord,
Both soul and body offering,
Be cheerfully with one accord,
Partakers of his suffering :
For they who shew true faithfulness
Shall gain a rich reward of grace.”

LECTURE II.

THE EPISTLES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES.—THE COURT OF HEAVEN.—
THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES.—THE OPENING OF THE SEALED
BOOK.—REVELATION II.—VI. 4.

HAVING, in the preceding Lecture, referred to the representative character of the seven Stars in the right hand of Jesus, I shall now briefly advert to the seven Epistles. These epistles, dictated by the great Head of the Church to the seven Churches of Asia, have been profitable to the faithful in all countries, and throughout all ages—encouraging the weak, sustaining the laborious, admonishing the careless, rousing the lukewarm, threatening the backslider, and promising to all who overcome, a heavenly and eternal reward. This promise runs through all the epistles, however diversified they may be in other respects, shewing that the faithful members will not lose their crown, because of the errors or the crimes of the majority of the Church to which they may belong; nor will the careless, or the sinner, or the self-righteous, receive a blessing because of their connection with a pure and faithful Christian community.

When referring to the Old Testament scriptures, Jesus said, “They are they which testify of me.” But now he testifies of himself. Each epistle is introduced by our Lord, announcing Himself by a title or an attribute specially adapted to the peculiar circumstances or condition of the Church to which it is addressed.

Thus, to the Ephesians, who are threatened with the removal of their candlestick, he describes himself as holding the seven stars in his right hand, and walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

To Smyrna he predicts tribulation, and exhorts her members to be faithful unto death, and they shall receive a crown of life.

And in the preface to their epistle, he encourages them by representing himself as "the first and the last, which was dead and is alive."

He draws the attention of the Church of Pergamos to his "sharp sword with two edges," and exhorts them to *repent*, else he will fight against them with the sword of his mouth.

Uncleanness and idolatry defiled the Church at Thyatira, and the Son of God reminds them that *his* eyes are like unto a flame of fire—searching the reins and the hearts,—and that his feet are like fine brass: indicating the purity and the holiness which should mark the footsteps of his followers.

The Church of Sardis had only a nominal life, but was dead; the spirit of watchfulness and of activity was almost gone; and she is threatened with sudden judgment. But Jesus tells her that he hath the seven spirits of God—the Spirit that can quicken the dead in trespasses and sins; the Spirit of life which makes free from the law of sin and death, which makes intercessions for the saints, helps their infirmities, and whose fruit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, faith.

To the Church of Philadelphia Jesus reveals himself as the holy and true, that hath the key of David, that openeth and no man shutteth; and he sets before them an open door (as the key-bearer or governor of the city), and encourages them, notwithstanding their little strength, to perseverance—promising as the Almighty ruler, who hath all power in heaven and earth, to humble their enemies, and to keep them in the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.

The Laodiceans were blinded by spiritual pride, and unconscious that they were wretched, miserable, poor, and blind, and naked; and dreamed that they were rich, and had need of nothing. But Jesus rouses them by an awful threatening, and as the "faithful and true witness," sets before them their deplorable condition, and exhorts them to seek true riches, heavenly raiment, and spiritual health from himself as the "beginning or *author* of the creation of God," in whom all fulness dwells.

The seven Churches of Asia became gradually corrupted by the superstitious practices which spread throughout the whole of Christendom—and the localities where they once flourished (with the exception of Smyrna) are now miserable villages, or heaps of ruins.

These epistles were doubtless especially suited to the state of the churches to which they were addressed; yet we need not hesitate to assert that they have been equally applicable to the Church in all ages. Some writers indeed have fancifully divided the history of the Church into seven periods, and appropriated an epistle to each:—and a late talented but eccentric divine imagined that the seven Asiatic churches were symbolical of the churches that now exist under different denominations in Christendom; applying to the *Brethren's* Church the character and commendation contained in the epistle to that of Philadelphia. In some points certainly a resemblance may be traced; but let us accept the admonition as well as the commendation, and feeling our “little strength,” keep the word of Christ’s patience, that we may be preserved in the coming hour of temptation,—and “hold fast that which we have, that no man take our crown.”

Not only throughout the epistles, but in the whole of the Apocalypse, Jesus manifests himself as the Head over all things to His body the Church. He watches their conduct—he exhorts them to faith and patience in the midst of their fiery trials—and holds out a crown of glory to the victorious. “He that overcometh shall inherit all things.” This is the golden thread that runs through all the wondrous tissue; and the *means* by which the faithful overcome, “even *the blood of the Lamb*,” is the secret source of their unfailing strength. It is the key-note of this mysterious but sublime oratorio, with which it begins, and with which it ends.

Immediately after the delivery of these epistles, that is, “of the things which are,” John says, “I beheld a door opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be *hereafter*.” Everything, therefore, which follows, was a revelation to John of events yet future, and sent to

each of the seven churches as the faithful and true sayings of God. So we find it written in the last chapter, "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches;" and, consequently in all the churches unto all his servants throughout all ages. Every one "that hath an ear" is called upon to hear.

John says, "Immediately I was in the Spirit." Whether like Paul, in the body or out of the body, God knoweth; but he was caught up to the third heaven—where Paul had heard unspeakable words which it was not possible for man to utter—but to St. John was given wisdom to understand and ability to describe the glorious visions which he saw. "Behold," he says, "a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices; and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne and round about the throne were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, oh Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (ch. iv. 2—11.)

In the former vision Jesus appeared unto his beloved disciple walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, the church militant here below. Now he is permitted to see the glories of heaven, and to stand before the throne on which sits the Eternal and Unsearchable Jehovah, "to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone"—indicating his purity and holiness, his justice and righteousness. John's vision of the throne and of the *living creatures* or cherubim (here improperly translated *beasts*), closely resembles that seen by Ezekiel; nor can we doubt their identity when the passages are carefully compared. The prophet Isaiah was favoured with a similar vision; and he tells us the seraphim or *burning ones* (another name for the cherubim), stood beside the throne and cried one unto another, as they are here represented in St. John's vision, saying, "Holy, holy holy, is the Lord of Hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." These were the same cherubim that are spoken of in the book of Genesis, as placed before the eastern gate of the garden of Eden with a flaming sword (or rather a fire infolding itself, or like burning coals of fire), to preserve the way to the tree of life.

These glorious beings are evidently of angelic nature, instinct with spirit, but of the very highest order. They support the fire-like throne of Jehovah, attending his presence, listening reverentially for his commands, and going and returning on them like a flash of lightning. Many conjectures have been hazarded respecting the meaning of their mysterious faces. They appear to be symbolical of the *power*, the *wisdom*, the *omnipresence*, and the *patience*, longsuffering or *mercy* of God, extending to the whole creation, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, and overruling all to the promotion of the gracious purposes of Jehovah. Round about the throne is seen the *rainbow*, with the green or emerald prevailing, the well-known symbol of the covenant of grace, where mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other. Ps. lxxxv. 10.

We are also reminded in this vision of St. John, of the tabernacle or temple of the Jews. In the holiest of all was seen the

mercy-seat or throne, above which, and between the cherubim, was the glory of God. "Before the throne" was the sea of glass, reminding us of the brazen sea which stood in the Court before the temple. Reference is also made to the altar of incense, and to the altar of burnt-offerings, under which were the souls or blood of them that were slain for the word of God, and the testimony which they held. But especially are we reminded of the seven-branched golden candlestick, by the seven lamps of fire which John saw burning before the throne. The twenty-four elders also—the representatives of the Church universal round about the throne, point to the twenty-four courses into which the priests were divided, who represented the children of Israel in the temple service. But these elders have crowns on their heads to signify that they have been made both kings and priests unto God.—Each one sits as "a priest upon his throne." Zech. vi. 13.

Thus, then, was exhibited to St. John the court of heaven, the holy and the most holy place, where were assembled the germ of the General Assembly and Church of the first born, the spirits of the just made perfect, Jesus with the blood of sprinkling, and God the Judge of all. Its resemblance to the interior of the tabernacle is what we are taught to expect; for the tabernacle, says St. Paul, was the *shadow* of HEAVENLY things, and Moses was admonished of God to make all things according to the pattern shewed him in the mount, where doubtless he was favoured with a similar vision to this seen by St. John. And again, Paul says, the patterns of things in the heavens were purified with blood, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices. The holy places made with hands are figures of the true into which Christ hath entered, even into heaven itself, the immediate presence of God, with his own blood consecrating for us a new and living way to the mercy seat, through the veil, that is to say his flesh. Hence it is, that John saw no veil in heaven separating between the holy and the most holy place; neither was there any table with the *shew-bread*, between which and the candlestick the high priest passed with the blood of atonement into the inner sanctuary. That golden table with the shew-

bread was a striking symbol of the "Bread that came to us from heaven;" but there was no need for its representation in the heavenly court, for Jesus himself, the Bread of life, was there, sitting upon the throne as a "Lamb that had been slain."

The seven lamps of fire (the seven-fold Spirit of God) burning before the throne, were typified by the golden candlestick before the veil in the holy place, which imparted light and comfort to all who drew near to worship. Such is the office of the Spirit of God *still*, and will be till the end of time. As the Jewish candlestick was *one* but with seven branches; so the Holy Spirit is *one*, but represented in his seven-fold perfect operations or gifts working in the Church. Hence he is represented not *on* the throne, but before it; shedding his influences on those without, as the Comforter sent from heaven to abide with the Church—as the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; the Spirit promised to the Apostles to shew them things to come; and whom St. John, in his opening salutation to the seven churches, unites with the Father and the Son, saying, "Grace be unto you and peace, from him which is and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness."

Much confusion has been produced by imperfect views of these seven lamps of fire, and of the four living creatures. Some commentators have argued at great length to prove that the four *living creatures* are emblematical of the Holy Spirit—apparently overlooking the positive declaration concerning the third person of the Trinity being identical with the seven spirits before the throne. Others have recognized this identity, and laboured to prove the four living creatures to be representatives of the Church triumphant, with the Holy Spirit joined to them, and animating their adoration; while others, acknowledging the *angelic* character of the cherubim, as identical with the four living creatures, have attempted to shew that they represent also the spirits of the just made perfect, who have now been made like unto the angels in dignity and in

nature, and are united with them in one glorious and mysterious symbol. At the same time it is admitted that the twenty-four elders are also representatives of those who have been redeemed from the earth. These various commentators confess that the question is one of *extreme difficulty*; and the difficulty rests in the four living creatures joining in the new song to the Lamb, and saying, "Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue and people;"—which we know cannot be said by any order of angelic beings, who not being partakers of human nature, and therefore having never sinned, need no redemption. Hence have arisen the many unsatisfactory attempts to explain this portion of the Apocalypse. I shall read the passage, and then attempt to solve the difficulty.

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." (ch. v. 8—10.)

Now, if we conceive the pronoun "they" in the 9th verse, to refer not to the four living creatures, but only to the four and twenty elders, the difficulty will be removed, and the distinctive harmony that subsists between the spirits of the just and the angelic choirs will remain undisturbed. Were there no other passage of similar construction in the Scriptures, I should not have ventured on such an explanation. But there are several, such as that in Genesis, where we read, "Thy seed shall be a stranger in the land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, and they shall afflict them four hundred years;" whereas we know that the four hundred years refers to the sojourning, not to the affliction. But there is a passage in the book of Jonah exactly parallel—parallel I mean in its construction, and in its evident application. (iii. 8.) The king of Nineveh proclaimed a fast, "Let man and *beast* be covered with

sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God ; yea let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." Here no one can fail to perceive, that these acts of repentance could only be performed by man, though the construction of the passage requires that both *beast and man* should cry mightily and turn from evil. So in the passage before us, every glance we have previously obtained in the scriptures of the nature of these exalted spiritual intelligences, justifies a similar mode of interpretation. The four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fall down before the Lamb; but the elders alone sing the new song of praise for their redemption: while the distinct and final "Amen" of the four living creatures closes the doxology of both angels and elders—and seems to corroborate the view I have taken of the subject. This instance is one among a thousand others where scripture is found to be the best interpreter of scripture; where light from the New Testament is thrown upon the Old, and again reflected back upon the New.

While John stood in the midst of this glorious company, he says, "I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (ch. v. 1, 2.)

The book doubtless appeared as a parchment roll, the usual form of books in the days of the Apostle, and sealed at intervals with seven seals, the seals hanging outside, though attached to the parchment within; and as each seal was opened, successive portions of the parchment could be unrolled. It was written within and without; and scenes were depicted opposite to, and in connection with, the grand and continuous visions, explaining and carrying forward the symbolic history from age to age—as in the beautiful and well arranged paintings of an elaborate panorama.

But "no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders said unto

me, Weep not ; behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." (ch. v. 3—7.)

The Lamb with seven horns, the symbol of Almighty power, and seven eyes, significant of omniscience—was seen "in the midst of the throne, as it had been slain." Jesus endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. He said to his servant John, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore." But he yet appears as the Lamb slain,—as bearing that nature in which he suffered.

In our nature when on earth, Jesus was made like unto his brethren. *They grow* in knowledge and grace, which attain to perfection in heaven. So He *increased in wisdom* and in stature; he learned obedience by the things which he suffered. Regarding certain events, he told his disciples, that of the day and hour no man nor angel knew, *neither the Son*, but the Father. But may we not believe that the knowledge of those things he knew not then, was part of that exaltation he received from the Father, when, after suffering, "he entered into his glory"?—and that now, as seen by John in vision, to the innumerable company of angels, and to the representatives of the redeemed from the earth, he revealed things which had been kept secret from the foundation of the world. We believe also, that they were part of those things which St. Paul says the angels desired to look into, and which they now learned through the Church's Head. Jesus, in taking the sealed book "out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne," was now 'reconciling the things in heaven,' as we pray in our Church Litany,—by exhibiting to the expectant and wondering hosts this proof of his power and omniscience, and shewing that in all things he had the pre-eminence; for it pleased the Father that in him

should all fulness dwell, and that at his name every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that he is Lord over all.

So John beheld—"When he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation: and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever. (ch. v. 8—14.)

But the wonderful things about to be revealed and which called forth the acclamations of angels, were especially addressed to men upon the earth; for John, as the representative of the church militant, was called upon to attend. One of the four living creatures saying "Come and see. And he saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer." (ch. vi. 1, 2.)

Believing, as I have already intimated, that the Apocalyptic visions succeed each other in chronological order, and unfold the leading events in the history of the Roman world, as well as of the Church in the midst of the world, it is necessary to examine the history of the period immediately following the date of the vision; for John was told "the things must shortly come to pass." But

as that examination has already been conducted with great skill and learning by a living writer, in the first four seals I need do little more than quote from his luminous pages.

The opening of these four seals unfolds to us the *temporary glory and decline* of Pagan Rome. The fifth points to the sufferings endured by the saints, and the depressed condition of the church, while in the sixth is foreshewn the overthrow of Paganism and the establishment of Christianity.

The most striking symbol in the first and three following seals is the *horse*, the emblem of the Roman people; representing them not in the character of an anti-Christian persecuting power; but simply as a military and martial people;—a meaning of the symbol accordant with its frequent use in Scripture, and actually exhibited on Roman medals as in Roman usage. The Romans regarded themselves as descended from Mars, to whom the horse was sacred, and as such sacrificed annually to him at Rome. Hence, no doubt, the use of the horse as one of the earlier military ensigns of the Romans. Its colours in the successive seals were the obvious indications of the successive symptomatic phases that the body politic which it represented would exhibit, from that of high health and prosperity to that of mortal dissolution. Its *riders* characterised the agents or agencies by which it would be acted upon and influenced: and each rider bore the distinctive *badge* of his *class*,—the *crown, bow, sword, balance, &c.* For the rider, in conformity with other emblematic symbols in prophecy, represents, not an individual, but a collective body, class, or series.

The first horse was *white*, indicating the Roman empire under the colour of triumph, prosperity, and health. And this was precisely and distinctively the state of the empire for eighty or ninety years succeeding the banishment of St. John; that is, from the death of Domitian, at the close of whose reign he was exiled, A.D. 96, through the successive reigns of Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the two Antonines, until the accession of Commodus in the year 180. It is this period which is first sketched by Gibbon (the best illustrator of prophecy as he has been called), before entering on

his great subject, the *Decline* of the Roman Empire. He represents it as a period of prosperity outward and inward, scarce to be paralleled in history—a period when the vast extent of the empire was governed by absolute power under the guidance of wisdom and virtue; “a period,” he continues, “*unstained with civil blood,*” (like the white colour of the horse in the vision). “If a man,” he adds, “were called to fix the period in the history of the world, during which the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus.” The wars of the Romans during this period were all but uniformly triumphant; they went forth “conquering and to conquer,” until the northern nations were reduced to submission, and the Parthians in the east were totally overthrown. *White* was the favourite colour for horses used by Roman generals in their triumphs, and the *laurel crown* was the token of their victory. But the crown referred to in the vision was that worn especially by the Emperors of the period, for which the diadem was afterwards substituted.

But in the first seal—“he that sat on him had a bow.” This symbol of the *bow* was not understood till lately. Its meaning, however, has been so admirably unfolded by Mr. Elliott, and its application is so striking, as to leave no room for doubt. He shews that the Emperor Nerva, with whom commenced this period of prosperity, was not of Roman or Italian origin, as all his predecessors in the Empire had been; but was from the Island of Crete; and that the distinguishing weapon of the Cretans was a bow; they were celebrated for its use and manufacture from the earliest ages; it was a national device impressed on their medals; in fact the name *Cretan* came to be considered as synonymous with *bow*. And in explaining a remarkable Greek epigram, wherein, among other emblems, the bow denotes a Cretan, the author says, “When I consider the important bearing of this point on the whole scheme of Apocalyptic interpretation, (for if my explanation of this first seal be *proved*, all the rest will follow,) I cannot but regard it as a remarkable providence that has preserved this most illustrative

epigram to us." And he adds, "How admirable, beyond what the most learned of human artists or scholars would have devised, appears now the point and the comprehensiveness of this device of the Divine Spirit! The crown was sufficient to designate the Emperors, but was not distinctive of them. But by the addition of the bow there was actually prefigured the very provincialism of the family to which the Empire was about to be committed; and under whom, and whom alone, the symbolic *horse* was to assume and to retain the *white* colour, the nation to enjoy prosperity, and in its wars to go on conquering and to conquer."

The second seal is opened, and a *red* horse is presented to the eyes of the Evangelist,—the colour of war and bloodshed; "to him that sat thereon it was given to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another, and there was given unto him a great sword." (ch. vi. 4.)

This is well explained by Gibbon, who after describing the bright period already mentioned, immediately narrates a long and almost unbroken series of bloody civil wars, caused by the licentious fury and military domination of the Prætorian guards and their commanders. They exercised for some forty or sixty years a reign of terror; making and massacring Emperors at their pleasure, and deluging the Empire with civil blood. It is said to have been an era of civil war and bloodshed, perhaps unparalleled in the world's history; and rendered more remarkable as having immediately succeeded a period of unexampled prosperity. Its influence on the empire was abiding and fatal. "It was," says Gibbon, "the first symptom and cause of the decline of the Roman Empire."

The badge of the rider on the red horse is a *great sword*. Now the presentation of a sword to any one at Rome was the well-known token of his appointment to the office of Prætorian Prefect; and which sword he not only bore, but had the right of judicially using. The *sword*, therefore, was as distinctive of the Prefect, as the *crown* was of the Emperor. But in this period of Roman history, his use of it was extraordinary and unnatural:—"it was given him to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another."

What a contrast does this exhibit to the reign of peace and righteousness which the Redeemer came on earth to establish. How painfully it exemplifies the character of fallen human nature given by an inspired writer, as "hateful and hating one another," shewing also how completely at that time the world was under the control of the Devil, who "was a murderer from the beginning"—and who still rules in the hearts of the "children of disobedience."

"O Thou Most Mighty! gird
Thy sword upon thy thigh,
That two-edg'd sword, thy Word,
By which thy foes shall die,—
Then spring, new born, beneath thine eye.
So perish all thine enemies!
Their enmity alone be slain;
Them, in the arms of mercy seize,
Breathe, and their souls shall come again."

LECTURE III.

OPENING OF THE THIRD, FOURTH, FIFTH, AND SIXTH SEALS.—SEALING OF THE 144,000.—OMISSION OF THE TRIBE OF DAN.—REVELATION VI. 5—VII. 8.

IN the preceding Lecture, the horse seen by St. John on the opening of the first four seals was shewn to be symbolic of the Roman Empire; and its colour to signify the symptomatic changes which occurred in the Empire between the day of the Apostle and the age of Diocletian. As each seal was opened, one of the four living creatures, with a voice of thunder, directed John's attention to it, saying, "Come and see." Thus pointing out to us one part of the office of these mysterious intelligences, as superintending the events, and controlling, at the inspiration of the Spirit of God, the judgments of the earth. We have a similar instance of the active interest they take in the affairs of mankind, recorded in the Old Testament, when, accompanied by the same cherubim, the Lord descended to visit the iniquity of Jerusalem, and shewed to Ezekiel its manifold idolatries, when the inhabitants presumptuously said, "The Lord seeth us not, the Lord hath forsaken the earth." It was then that the "coals of fire from between the cherubim"—signifying the hot displeasure of the Almighty—were commanded to be scattered over the city, and "one cherub took the fire," and put it into the hands of him who was appointed to execute the judgment of the Lord.

We have already shewn, by reference to history, the meaning and the fulfilment of the first and second seals, to which John's attention had been called by two of the living creatures, and shall now proceed to the explanation of the third.

"When he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a *black horse*; and he that

sat on him had a *pair of balances* in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." (ch. vi. 5, 6.)

The colour of the horse in this vision, connected as it seems to be with the price of corn, has been generally understood to indicate *famine*; but *black* is the constant emblem of mourning and distress, and does not necessarily imply scarcity of food. Besides, there is no personification of famine in the *rider*;—he bears in his hand the balance of equity, and is admonished not to injure or be unjust. For the clause "see that thou hurt not," would be more correctly translated "see that thou *wrong* not in regard to the oil and the wine." Neither does the price of wheat intimated in the vision denote scarcity; for a denarius (or penny) for a *Roman* measure (which is doubtless the measure meant, and not the Greek, as all the other symbols refer to the Roman empire,) is about ten shillings a bushel, which was probably the medium price of corn in those days.

The vision therefore has been explained by learned commentators as having reference not to a state of actual *famine*, (to be killed "with hunger" is one of the plagues inflicted under the following seal), but to a condition of oppressive *taxation*, to which the Empire was reduced by the Emperor Caracalla. The celebrated edict by which he made the city of Rome co-extensive with the empire, compelled the Provincials to pay taxes which were intolerable; not only those usually imposed upon the provinces, but also, in addition, the distinctive taxes of the Roman citizen. "Every part of the Empire," says Gibbon, "groaned under the weight of his iron sceptre." The black colour of the horse was the sign of distress and impoverishment in the body politic: and Gibbon, speaking of this fatal edict, says, "it sprang up with the most luxurious growth, and *darkened* the Roman world with its *deadly shade*." In fact, the edict of Caracalla produced lasting and increasing distress; for the taxation having special reference to the fruits of the earth,—the corn, the oil, and the wine, as the vision intimates—the agriculture

of the provinces was insensibly ruined, and thus preparation was made for the famine which soon succeeded.

The historian assigns the oppressiveness of the taxation consequent on this edict, especially as administered by the Provincial governors, as the second notable cause of the decline of the Roman empire. The articles of produce on which the taxation fell, were those noted in the vision,—and the *corn, wine, and oil* were also included in the largesses, or donations, which at this period were drawn from the provinces and distributed by the Emperors among the Roman citizens. “We shall be too often summoned,” says Gibbon, “to explain the land tax, the capitation, and the heavy contributions of corn, wine, oil, and meat, exacted from the provinces for the use of the court, the army, and the capital.”

The political heavens in consequence grew black, like clouds obscuring the light of the sun, and at last burst in a terrific and devastating storm upon the earth. One awful effect of the crushing taxation of the corn, wine, and oil, by which the people were impoverished, was their inability to maintain their children; and the horrible crime of infanticide prevailed throughout the empire as the result. Attempts, indeed, were frequently made to mitigate the evils, by fixing the price at which the corn, the oil, and the wine should be sold; but these imperial edicts were ineffectual.* Alexander Severus, whose character it was to do justice and to love mercy, in trying to effect a reformation, only inflamed the ills he meant to cure: and for what he did, and shewed that he wished to do, he paid the penalty of his life.

The agents in these oppressive exactions were the provincial presidents or Proconsuls, who were wont to strike coins or medals stamped with the very symbol borne by the rider on the black

* The brevity and simple language of these edicts are singularly illustrative of the text. One is cited by Elliott, stating the price to be paid by the Provincial authorities—“A modius of wheat for a denarius!”—remarkably similar to the words pronounced by the voice from the midst of the four living creatures.

horse, viz.—“a pair of balances.” The Divine Spirit thus marking with distinctiveness and beautiful propriety, as in the other visions, the party intended by the *rider*; while the Roman measure, the wheat and the barley, which in the simple hieroglyphic did not admit of *visible* delineation, were *audibly* mentioned by the voice from the midst of the four living creatures.

The opening of the fourth seal exhibits a *pale horse*, (more correctly *grassy green* or *livid*,) “and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed after him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.” (ver. 8.)

This denotes an era of terrible mortality; and Gibbon faithfully explains the vision. From the year 248, he says, to the death of Gallienus in 268, was a period of “shame and misfortune, of confusion and calamity;”—“The ruined Empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution—every province was afflicted by *barbarous invaders*, and military tyrants;” “a general famine,” he continues, “the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, extirpated the produce of the present, and the hope of the future harvests.” For fifteen years a furious plague raged without intermission in every province, every city, and almost every family in the Roman Empire. For some time 5,000 persons died daily in Rome, and many towns were entirely depopulated. “We may suspect,” he adds, “that *war, pestilence* and *famine*, had consumed in a few years the moiety of the human species.” The *wild beasts* also, as a natural consequence of this extraordinary diminution of mankind, multiplied to an alarming extent in many parts of the Empire: adding to the horrors of the survivors, and increasing the terrible destruction that marked the footsteps of the pale horse, as he careered with his ghastly rider through the length and breadth of the Roman world.

The *rider* in the fourth seal was not the representative of human functionaries or political rulers. It was the personification of *Death*—the king of terrors—and his badge or accompaniment was *Hades*, or the Grave; and power was given to them over the fourth part

of the earth to kill, with the *sword* and with *hunger*, (or *famine*), and with *death*, (or *pestilence*), and with the *beasts* of the earth. The power of these agents of destruction seems limited to the *fourth part* of the Roman world. But in the quotation from Gibbon we find the *whole* Empire was suffering,—no part was exempted from the scourge. Various solutions have been attempted of this difficulty, but with very indifferent success. The most satisfactory is that offered by Elliott, who proposes, by a slight alteration in the translation, to describe these four sore judgments of God (as they are called in Ezekiel, xiv. 21), as *in action* at this time in the land. As if each had its allotted locality of destruction. As it is said in Jeremiah xv. 2, “Such as are for *pestilence* to pestilence, such as are for the *sword* to the sword, such as are for *famine* to the famine, such as are for the *captivity* to captivity.” But this does not get rid of all the difficulty; for the text expressly confines the power of Death to “the fourth part of the earth.” May not, therefore, the true rendering be, that Death had power over the fourth part of the *men* of the earth: and that literally, during the twenty years indicated by Gibbon, *one-fourth* of the human species perished, by the sword of the barbarians, by famine, by pestilence, and by wild beasts. I have already quoted his suspicion that *one-half* of the human race had been consumed; but he is there referring particularly to the numbers who perished in Alexandria, and he supposes that a similar proportion had fallen in other provinces: that, however, seems too high an estimate; but from the various statements that are given, we may safely conclude that not less than *one-fourth* of the men of the Roman world fell under the power of Death.

The fourth of the living creatures had called the Apostle's attention to the terrible judgments which were depicted on the scroll when the fourth seal was opened:—but when the Lamb opened the fifth seal, a different scene was presented to his view, and he heard a different cry. “I saw (he says) under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy

R

and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (ver 9, 10.)

Hitherto St. John had seen the symbols of the changing condition of the Roman world; but now the state of the Christian Church is exhibited before him—a state of suffering and depression—which could not fail to bring forcibly to the mind of the Apostle the words uttered by Jesus in that memorable night in which he was betrayed, "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."—"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John xv. 20; xvi. 33.) The vision exhibits the souls *under the altar* (like the blood of the sacrifices slain on the Jewish altars). As we read in Leviticus (chap. iv.) "the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar which is before the Lord, that is in the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall pour out all the blood at the bottom of the altar of the burnt offering, which is at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." This figure was well understood by the early Christians, who are exhorted to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to the Lord. The *soul* or spirit is often used for the blood, as we read, "the blood is the life thereof." The altar itself is seen by St. John, as if standing in the court of the Temple. But the blood had not been shed to make an atonement; it was poured out to gratify the hatred and the malice of the enemies of the Cross of Christ. It was "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held,"—the Christian *martyrs*, from Stephen down to those who fell in the period indicated in the vision. It had been a long scene of tribulation. Commencing in the days of the Apostles, in Jerusalem and in all Judea, afterwards extended by Nero throughout the Roman empire; and again revived under Domitian, who had banished John himself to Patmos; other emperors afterwards awoke the slumbering fires of persecution, especially Decius, who exerted himself to "crush the Christians." But the last, the longest, and the most terrible, was the persecution under Diocletian. He and

his colleagues resolved to extirpate Christianity from the face of the earth—and fondly hoped they could accomplish their purpose! This was the culminating point of the sufferings of the Church, previous to the overthrow of Paganism. It is emphatically called the *Era of Martyrs*, dating from the year 284, when Diocletian was proclaimed Emperor; and this era was used by the Christian writers in computing time until the sixth century. It is still used by the Copts and Ethiopians.

The Church was therefore, at the very time prefigured in the vision, compassed about with a great cloud of New Testament witnesses—(like the cloud of Old Testament worthies referred to by St. Paul;—and of both it may with equal propriety be said, “the world was not worthy;”)—“they had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they were killed all the day long, and were counted as sheep for the slaughter; but in all these things they were more than conquerors through Him that loved them.” As it is expressed in the 12th chapter of the Revelation, which has reference to the same period of the Church’s history, “They overcame by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Death for them had no terror, and they could look him steadily in the face; or rather, they looked beyond death, and saw Jesus the Captain of their salvation, the *Prince of Life*, beckoning them onward through suffering, to become partakers of his glory.

Their souls are represented as crying with a loud voice, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” (ver. 10, 11.)

The blood of the *innocent* is ever represented as crying for judgment—from the blood of Abel onward to the present day,—and it is exacted in God’s own time and manner, on the persecutors or

their representatives. As our Lord himself tells the Jews, (Luke xviii. 7), "Shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."

And speedily on that generation vengeance came. Following in the footsteps of their persecuting fathers, the Jews filled up the measure of their iniquity; and then, as the Lord had foretold, "Upon *them* came all the *righteous* blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias the son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar." Their city and temple was then overthrown, and for 1800 years they have been scattered over the face of the earth.

Has the blood of the Christian martyrs been yet avenged? The souls under the altar are represented as crying, *How long?*—And on the overthrow of Paganism a few years after, we might suppose that the day of vengeance had arrived. But it was not so. Instead of *vengeance* they received *justification*, symbolized by the white robes given unto every one of them. This justification must refer to their character and memory on earth; not to their justification in the sight of God, which is also symbolized by white robes, but robes washed in the *blood of the Lamb*.

The whole scenery of the visions exhibited on the opening of the seals, refers to events which afterwards took place on the earth. And this justification of the martyrs we find recorded in history as an event that attended the establishment of Christianity. The martyrs were declared *innocent* of the many crimes laid to their charge:—their memory was honoured—their tombs and their relics venerated—and the faith for which their blood had been shed, became the religion of the State.

They were thus comforted in the vision; and they were also desired to "rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants and brethren should be killed as they were"—and then, as is clearly implied, their blood should be avenged "on them that dwell on the earth."

It was thus intimated to St. John, that persecution would con-

tinue; and in subsequent visions he is frequently called upon to behold the faith and patience of the saints while suffering in fiercer fires than ever their predecessors had endured. But still the martyrs *rest*, and their blood is yet unavenged; for persecution has not yet ceased.

We are all familiar with the names of those who are even now suffering for the "Word of God;"* and many more may be called on to suffer *even unto death*, and the true Church itself have to wage a furious warfare with the powers of Anti-Christ, before the judgment goes forth; and great Babylon "come in remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath, because her sins have reached unto heaven." *Then* shall be heard the voice of the angel, saying, "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her;" and as on Jerusalem came the blood of all the Old Testament martyrs, so of the mystical Babylon it is declared, "In *her* was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of *all* that were slain upon the earth." (ch. xviii. 20, 24.)

How long?—The chronology of the visions already realized on the earth, leads us to believe that the time is at hand. Let us attend to the warning, which the suddenness of the events of the present day forces on the mind, "Behold, I come as a thief! Blessed is he that watcheth."

Let us now turn to the sixth seal.—"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men and the chief captains, and the mighty men and every bondman,

* The Madii and others, who were then (1852) persecuted and imprisoned in Italy.

and every freeman hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" (ver. 12—17.)

The remarkable symbols employed in this seal, and the wonderful changes it prefigures in both heaven and earth, have led many to consider this vision as descriptive of the final consummation of all things. But when we look at its place in the Apocalypse, and the meaning of similar symbolic phrases in other passages of the word of God, we are constrained to apply it to some great political Revolution in the Roman world. Similar language is used by the prophet Joel, and quoted by St. Peter on the day of Pentecost: "The sun," he says, "shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come."—But that day refers to the destruction of the *Jewish* commonwealth, and the vengeance taken for the blood of the saints, as has been shewn in the preceding seal. The sun and moon and stars were used as symbols of Rulers from the earliest ages, as we find in Joseph's dream recorded in the book of Genesis. (xxxvii. 9.) So in Ezekiel (xxxii. 7. 8) the overthrow of Pharaoh king of Egypt by the Babylonians is thus predicted, "When I shall put thee out, I will cover the heavens, and make the stars thereof dark, I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven I will make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord." There are other passages of similar import. And in the prophecies of Hosea, we find the same language attributed to the Israelites in their distress, which is here used by those who attempt to flee from the wrath of the Lamb; they say to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us."

We may then inquire, what change took place in the Roman empire, chronologically following the era of the martyrs prefigured in the foregoing seal, to which these symbols may justly be applied; and on turning to history, we find, that precisely at the time

depicted in the vision, one of the most memorable and most astonishing facts of history occurred. Contemporary writers seem lost in admiration when they speak of it: and Dr. Adam Clarke says, "The destruction of Jerusalem, and the *revolution* which took place in the Roman Empire under Constantine, were the greatest events that have ever taken place in the world from the flood to the present day." This revolution arose from the triumph of Christianity over its enemies. It involved the destruction of Paganism, and the sweeping from their high places of all Pagan powers and authorities. And this at a time too, when the Christians, as Tertullian represents them, though *many* in themselves, were but *few* in comparison, and reduced by long persecution apparently to the lowest point of depression. But, as has often been observed, Man's extremity is God's opportunity; and nothing can frustrate the accomplishment of His purpose.

For the deliverance of the Jews he raised up *Cyrus*; for the deliverance of the Christians he raised up *Constantine*. The Emperor Diocletian had divided the empire into four parts, and Constantine succeeded to the government of the western division. He soon avowed his espousal of the Christian cause, and adopted the *Cross* as his distinctive military ensign. That object of abomination to the heathen Romans, was seen "glittering in the helmets, engraved on the shields and interwoven with the banners of his soldiers." It would remind his Christian followers of the declaration of St. Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Why he adopted such an ensign has been the subject of much discussion. Constantine *himself* declared that he saw a vision of a *cross of flame* in the sky, and heard a voice from heaven encouraging him to adopt it, accompanied with the promise, "By this ensign thou shalt conquer." And well, says Elliott, was the promise fulfilled. Army after army, emperor after emperor, were routed and fled and perished, before the cross and its warriors. Consternation and terror seized upon them. It was not the terror of their earthly victor only that oppressed them. There was a consciousness of the powers of heaven acting against

them : above all, Christ, the Christian's God. For the war in each case was felt to be a religious war. When Maxentius went forth to battle, he went fortified by heathen oracles, and relying on heathen Gods,—the champion of heathenism against the champion of Christianity. When Maximin was about to engage, he vowed to Jupiter, that if successful, he would extirpate Christianity. When Licinius marched against Constantine, he in a public harangue before his soldiers, ridiculed the Cross, and staked the falsehood of Christianity on his success. Thus, in all these cases, the terrors of defeat must have been aggravated by a sense of the powers of heaven being with Constantine against them. Wherever the banner of the Cross was raised, there victory attended. "The heathen and apostates," says Gibbon, "felt and dreaded its power." Besides this, we have recorded the dying terrors of one and another of the persecuting emperors. Galerius evinced his remorse by entreating the Christians to pray to their God for him ; and Maximin, in anguish of mind and body, confessed his guilt and called on Christ to compassionate his misery. Thus did a sense of the wrath of the *crucified one*, the *Lamb of God*, lie heavy upon them. In the terrors of the battle-field, officers and soldiers, the high and the low, the slaves and the free men, alike participated. In considering these mighty emperors, like mountains moved out of their places, and their partizans routed before the Christian host, we acknowledge the propriety of the symbols in the vision before us :—in which kings and generals, freemen and slaves, were seen flying, and seeking to the dens and the rocks of the mountains to hide them, —to hide them from the face of him that sat upon the throne of power, and "from the wrath of the Lamb."

Chapter VII.—"After these things," saith St. John, "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor

the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." (ver. 1—3.)

The Roman world, though now Christian in name, was yet Pagan in heart, and her continued and multiplied iniquities drew down upon her the righteous judgments of God. And John here saw the ministers of God's wrath ready to execute their mission; but they are stayed for awhile. The earth, the sea, and the trees are not yet to be hurt. For, another angel ascends from the east (significant of the source of *light and life*), having the seal of the living God (2 Tim. ii. 19), wherewith to seal those whom the Lord knew to be his, and who, having named the name of Christ, had also departed from iniquity. Until *his* mission was accomplished, and the servants of God screened from the impending plagues, the four angels of destruction, like those who waited upon Lot in Sodom, "could do nothing."

What did this sealing especially signify, and by what outward sign was it manifested to the world? It is worthy of notice, that the servants of many of the heathen gods were likewise marked with the peculiar symbol of their deity: as the worshippers of Bacchus, who bore the impression of the vine leaf on their forehead. So, also, many Hindoos at this day are marked in a similar manner. There is one of high rank at present in London, whom I have known for several years, (Rungoo Bapojee). The mark on his forehead looks as if it had been originally burnt into the skin; it is of a dark red colour; and he carefully renews it from time to time. Thus shewing, in the midst of a Christian community, his steady attachment to his own religion, and his faith in his idol god.

In the book of Revelation also (ch. xii.), the mark of the beast is referred to; but that might be either in the *forehead* or in the *hand*. A remarkable, but very significant distinction; shewing that under the Anti-Christian power, man would be encouraged to trust in the efficacy of the established idols and ceremonies, or he might trust in his own ability (signified by the hand) to work out his own salvation.

The Israelites in Egypt trusted in God, and marked their door-

posts with blood. It signified that they were under his special protection. The *blood* was the outward and visible sign, but that indicated *their faith* in Jehovah's promise, and their *obedience* to his command. So also, when the Lord was about to destroy Jerusalem, Ezekiel saw how the few righteous men within it were preserved. (ix. 4.) One clothed with linen was commanded to set a mark on "the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." They were distinguished by their faith and obedience, while the rest of the nation had rebelled against the Lord, and were revelling in the most abominable idolatry.

So we find, on referring to the history of the Church in the fourth and following centuries, that *obedience* to the commands of Christ had been superseded by *obedience* to the traditions of men, and the decrees of Councils; and *faith* in the blood of the atonement, as the only hope of salvation, had given way to *faith* in the sacraments—*faith* in the relics of martyrs—*faith* in the prayers of departed saints—*faith* in celibacy and solitude—*faith* in fastings and penances. The mystery of iniquity indeed had begun to work in the days of the Apostles; and in the epistles to the seven Churches of Asia we see (even in those early times) its fearful progress. And this religion of superstition and credulity was the religion of the Church centuries before the embodiment of Popery.

Yet there were still many faithful *witnesses* to the truth *sealed* by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption; who, by their blameless life and simple faith in Jesus, were as much distinguished from the professing multitude of nominal Christians, as if the seal of the living God had been visibly impressed on their foreheads. And not only did they, having the *seal*, depart from *iniquity* in spirit; but also they departed in body from the gross iniquity by which they were surrounded. For we are informed by St. Salvian, a writer of the fourth century,—who describes in indignant language the fearful licentiousness of all ranks of society, (including even the monks and nuns who then infested the Church), and the dreadful oppressions inflicted on the poorer classes,—that many thousands

of the poor and despised Christians left the Empire at this time, and took refuge among the barbarians! Many of them, we may well believe, the ancestors of the Paulicians in the East, and the Waldenses in the West. This is a striking illustration of the way in which God screens his faithful people from the judgments he is about to inflict on a corrupted Church. As he declares in Rev. iii. 10, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

The number of the sealed was 144,000 of all the tribes of the children of Israel, 12,000 of each tribe. Our attention has already been drawn to the Israelites, as typical of the Christian Church; for all who are of faith are the children of Abraham, (Gal. iii. 7). But we must not forget that many thousands of the Jews themselves believed; some perhaps out of every tribe. Gentiles, however, as well as Jews, are included in this numbering and sealing; for in Christ Jesus there is no distinction,—neither circumcision nor uncircumcision: there is neither Jew nor Greek,—there is neither bond nor free. And, as if to intimate this more pointedly, we find here an arrangement of the tribes different to any in the Old Testament. *There* they are mentioned according to priority of birth: or more usually, the children of the free women are named first, and those of the bond women afterwards. *Here*, there is no such distinction; Judah takes precedence of Reuben, and bond and free children are mixed together. *Levi* also takes his place among the tribes, shewing that his office of priesthood was at an end—his attendance on the temple service no longer necessary; that he now belonged to a Church whose great High Priest had passed into the heavens;—and *all whose members* on the earth were an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ. (1 Peter ii. 5.)

But why is the tribe of *Dan* omitted? This question I once put to a popular preacher, and his answer was, To make room for the tribe of *Levi*! This unsatisfactory reply is the best that has been given; and the only one that I am aware of, except a

conjecture that *Dan* may possibly have originally been written where *Manasses* now stands. But I believe that *Dan* was purposely omitted, because of the early departure of that tribe from the pure worship of God, and their continued idolatry during the whole period of the existence of the Israelitish kingdom. And this, notwithstanding those memorable words of Jacob when blessing their father Dan, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord :"—words which must have been to them a perpetual reproach when the faith and hope thus expressed by the dying Patriarch, was contrasted with their own wretched idolatry. Soon after the death of Joshua, the Danites migrated from Zorah and Eshtaol to the neighbourhood of Mount Lebanon,—the most northern part of Palestine. On their way they stole Micah's gods, and took with them the grandson of Moses to be the priest to their tribe :—and they worshipped the graven images all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh. And when Jeroboam made the *golden calves*, he placed the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan ; and "this thing became a sin : for the people went to *worship* before the one, even unto Dan :"—words which seem to imply, that the people might worship *the Lord* (though not in the way he had appointed) before the calf in Beth-el, but at *Dan* the worship was *undisguised idolatry*. It is a singular fact, that the worship of the calf, as stated by various travellers, is still practised in the same locality, by the *Druses*, a people whose origin has never been ascertained. Dr. Clarke supposed them, because of their worship of the calf, to be descended from the mixed multitude who accompanied the Israelites from Egypt ; others have imagined them to be the offspring of the Crusaders ; and others conjecture them to be descended from the followers of the fanatical Caliph Hakim. The celebrated French traveller Lamartine, says, "In my opinion the Druses are one of those nations, whose origin is lost in the darkness of remote ages, but which is derived from the highest antiquity. In a physical point of view, their race has a great resemblance to that of the Jews ; and their worship of the calf would induce the belief, either that they were of Samaritan origin, or derive their descent from those

tribes of Arabia Petraea through whose example the Israelites adopted this species of idolatry."

But we know that the Israelites did not borrow the worship of the calf from any Arab tribe, and that it existed among them long before the Samaritans were planted in Palestine. It seems, therefore, a much more probable supposition, that the Druses inherited their peculiar idolatry from the Danites, whose land they now partially inhabit; and that they are, in fact, really descended from that remarkable tribe; especially as it is stated that their physiognomy is decidedly Jewish—that their language is a dialect of Arabic which is closely allied to the Hebrew—and that in their dress and many of their customs, they resemble the ancient Israelites.

From their vicinity to the mountains, it would be easy for the Danites to escape the captivity in which the other tribes were involved. A few resolute men, says Admiral Napier, might defend the passes of the Lebanon against the best appointed army. The Druses are a warlike and independent race, owning only occasionally a nominal subjection to the Turks, and are ruled by their own chiefs. Thus verifying Jacob's prediction concerning the Danites, even to this day:—"Dan shall *judge* his people as one of the tribes of Israel." The Druses seem very indifferent regarding religion—worshipping with the Mahomedans one day and with Christians on the next. Their own peculiar worship of the *calf* is performed in secret, and none but the initiated are permitted to attend.

Assuming these statements as facts—and there appears no good reason to doubt them—we may perceive that by their isolated situation, as well as by their abandonment to idolatry, the Danites became completely separated from the other tribes of Israel; and we are thus furnished with a sufficient reason why the name of Dan is *omitted* when the spiritual Israel are sealed by the angel of the Lord.

It may also be remarked, as a proof of the apostasy of the Danites, and their excision from the Israelitish stock, that an opinion prevailed, both among Jews and Christians in the early ages, that Anti-

Christ was to be of the tribe of Dan: founded partly on the prophecy of Jacob, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord;"—as if the posterity of Dan would not await it; and partly on the tribe of Dan not being sealed in the Revelation. Hence it is supposed *Attila* affected to be called King of the Danes, and attempted to establish an Anti-Christian empire.

It has been observed, that the 144,000 sealed ones were but a small number, compared with the vast body of professing Christians now in the Roman empire. This had always been true; but at the period to which the vision refers, when Christianity had become the religion of the State, myriads professed it only by compulsion or in hypocrisy. Taking the amount of the population of the twelve tribes when united as a kingdom under David or Solomon, the 144,000 sealed ones indicates a proportion of only *one in fifty*—a proportion small indeed. But the Church of Christ has always been a little flock—"for many are called, but few are chosen." When meditating on this solemn fact, we may be permitted to ask, Why is this? Our Lord himself gives the answer, when he said to the Pharisees, "*Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*"

May we, as individuals, "give all diligence to make *our* calling and our election sure," that we may be numbered among the sealed ones, the spiritual members of the true Church; and so "abide in *Him*, that when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

Hold o'er thy church, Lord, thy protecting hand,
And in thy truth O may she ever stand;
May thy ransom'd people shew forth thy praises,
And be devoted to thy name, Lord Jesus,
Until thou com'st.

LECTURE IV.

THE WHITE-ROBED MULTITUDE.—OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL.—
SILENCE IN HEAVEN.—THE INCENSE-BEARING ANGEL.—THE SEVEN
TRUMPETS.—THE FIRST ANGEL SOUNDS.—REVELATION VII. 9—17 :
VIII. 1—12.

THE sealing of the 144,000 servants of God, described in the seventh chapter, occupied our attention towards the close of the preceding Lecture. These, we endeavoured to shew, signified the Church of God—like the Israelites in the wilderness, separated from the world—enjoying his presence, and preserved by his power. We shall have occasion, afterwards, to speak of the Church under the figure of a Woman, living in this wilderness condition for 1260 years. But at present it is interesting to refer to St. Augustine, who lived at the very period indicated in the vision, when the Church was united with the State—and its members were “part of iron and part of clay.” Augustine maintained, in opposition to the prevailing heresies, the doctrine of *Justification by Faith* alone. In his celebrated work “The City of God,” he speaks of the justified as the *only* inhabitants of Zion, and describes their privileges, their number, their citizenship, their employment, their objects, and their future glory,—and that these alone, and *not* all who were called by the name of Christ, constituted the true Church.

This select and sealed number is repeatedly presented to our notice in other passages of the Apocalypse, and under various figures:—as the two Witnesses in the eleventh chapter,—the Woman clothed with the Sun in the twelfth,—the Saints in the thirteenth,—and again in the fourteenth chapter as the 144,000 followers of the Lamb, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads, who are “without fault before the throne of God.”

In this seventh chapter, immediately after the vision of the

sealing, John is favoured with a vision of the blessedness of the Redeemed.

"I beheld," he says, "and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne, on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen : Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes ? and whence came they ? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple : and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (vii. 9—17.)

This vision takes us back to the glorious rainbow-encompassed throne, on which sat God the Judge of all, and at his right hand the Lamb as it had been slain ; while before the throne burned the seven lamps of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and round about it were the cherubim and the seats of the elders, and an innumerable company of angels. But *now*, in addition to this glorious assemblage, appeared with loud thanksgivings before the throne, a "countless throng" of the redeemed from the earth. It is the opinion of some commentators, that this vision is anticipatory of the future glory of the sealed ones. They have been led to this conclusion, by the expression; *These are they which*

came out of *the* great tribulation. But there are serious objections to this exclusive view of the vision. In the first place, such an anticipation of events is unprecedented and without a parallel in the Apocalypse, where every thing is arranged in chronological order, and events succeed each other in natural sequence. Secondly, the "innumerable multitude" spoken of, gives us an idea of numbers immensely greater than what is conveyed by the definite term 144,000, even viewed as the aggregation of centuries. Thirdly, they are of "all nations, peoples, kindreds, and tongues"—of the infants as well as the aged, "for of such," said Jesus, "is the kingdom of heaven"—not of the Roman Empire only, or confined to the Christian era:—they belonged to all time, and were gathered from off the face of the whole earth, beginning with Abel, the first who died in faith, the first who came out of great tribulation—and embracing all who died in the faith, from Adam to Moses, from Moses to Christ; those who lived under the law, and those who lived without the law; in every age and in every nation,—those "who feared God and worked righteousness:" trusting for salvation to the *blood of atonement*, which was shadowed forth in every sacrifice, whether offered on Jewish or on heathen altars.

Whence came they? They came out of great tribulation. "All who will live godly," said our Lord, "must suffer persecution." The Old Testament saints experienced this; and St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, gives us an affecting account of their faith and their sufferings. But he adds, "they received *not* the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should *not* be made perfect."

Wherein then consists the difference between *them* and *us*?—between those who died in the *hope* of a Redeemer to come, and those who die in the *faith* of a salvation accomplished? We read of the Patriarchs, that they gave up the ghost and were gathered unto *their fathers*;—but now, believers desire to depart and to *be with Christ*, which is far better. The souls of the faithful before the atonement made on Calvary, *did not go to heaven*; they were preserved in a *separate state* (of happiness certainly, but not of glory)

H

which is called Hades, sometimes translated *Hell*—as it is said of our Lord himself, “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell:”—it was there,—called also *Paradise*, as Jesus said unto the dying thief, “To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise,”—and it was usually spoken of by the Jews as *Abraham’s bosom*, as in the well-known parable of the rich man and Lazarus:—it was there—into that place the Spirit of Jesus descended, when he expired on the cross. As we read in the Epistle to the Ephesians, “He descended first into the lower parts of the earth”—but his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. He overcame Death and the Grave. Even when he yielded up the ghost, he openly manifested his power as the Lord of life, for “the earth did quake and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.” He thus spoiled principalities and powers,—and when He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive (Ps. lxxviii. 18); for those who had been held captive by Death in the prison of Hades, were delivered by the Almighty Conqueror, and carried by Him as trophies of his victory, when He entered into heaven. This is also foreshewn by the Prophet Isaiah (xxv. 7, 8), when he describes the Lord as a mighty man bursting open the vaulted roof of the vast cemetery in which the souls of the righteous had been sleeping—“He will destroy the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.” And afterwards he adds, (xxvi. 2), “Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” They entered in, when Jesus ascended up on high; the spirits of the redeemed following in his train with thousands of angels, when the everlasting doors, the gates of heaven, were thrown open to admit the King of glory—the Lord mighty in battle. And there, in the presence of the Lamb, the spirits of the Old Testament saints constitute the general assembly and church of the first born, whose ranks had been swelled by those who, from the ascension of Jesus

to the period of John's vision, had left the Church below, and formed that great multitude which no man could number, who were seen by the Apostle standing before the throne of God, with palms in their hands, indicating the *victory* they had gained, not by their own might, but through the power of Him that loved them. And now they serve Him day and night in His temple.

This is the clearest as well as most glorious description of the happiness and employment of departed saints that had hitherto been communicated to the Church: and looking at the place it occupies in the Apocalypse, it seems peculiarly adapted to the condition of the faithful followers of Christ in that period of history to which the vision evidently refers. The Church, as we have seen, had but recently emerged from a storm of persecution, and many had fallen martyrs to the truth. Now, wealth and honours were heaped upon her, and her love waxed cold; iniquity abounded within her; and though she said, "I am rich and have need of nothing," she was poor and miserable, and blind and naked. The outward structure was indeed magnificent, but there was no Urim and Thummim, the glory of the Lord had departed. There only existed a small remnant, the sealed ones, the 144,000: and they were despised and insulted,

Men the world deserved not,
Hard and cheerless was their lot.

But though humble and contemned here below, an eternal and transcendent glory awaited them in heaven above.

For *their* comfort, through long ages of obscurity and distress, for the confirmation of their faith and the strengthening of their hope, this revelation of the white-robed multitude before the throne was given. This multitude they felt persuaded they should, with every faithful follower of Jesus, be permitted to join. To this multitude their thoughts would often revert—and their lips apostrophise, as they sang in joyful anticipation

"See how the victors go,
In raiment white as snow,
With glory crowned.

The Lamb grants them, through grace,
 Around His throne a place,
 On whom death frowned.
 How blest, when we can say,
 All else is fled away
 And love prevaileth :
 No longer faith and hope
 We need to bear us up,
 Love never faileth."

When the vision of the white-robed multitude was withdrawn, the Apostle's attention was directed to the Lamb with the book in his hand. Six of the seals had been opened, and now—"when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." (viii. 1.)

Various opinions have been offered concerning the meaning of this short silence in heaven—some referring it to the rest of the Church after the triumph of Christianity under Constantine—and others to the peace in the Empire previous to the irruptions of the Goths in the year 390; but neither opinion is supported by history. In the Church the well-known heresies of the Arians and the Donatists, led to the most deplorable disorders and fearful massacres. St. Hilary, who lived at this time, says, "there are as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us. Every year, nay every moon, we make new creeds to describe invisible mysteries. We condemn either the doctrines of others in ourselves, or our own in that of others, and reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin." "The bands of civil society;" says Gibbon, "were torn asunder by the fury of religious factions;" and the adherents of rival candidates in Rome and Constantinople decided the election of a Bishop by an appeal to arms, and in mutual fury filled the streets with the bodies of the slain. The so-called Novatian heretics "were imprisoned, persecuted and driven into exile. Whole troops of them were massacred, and their towns and villages were utterly destroyed." In another portion of the Empire,

the fanaticism of the Donatists in the year 345 led to the most horrible outrages, and justified the assertion of a pagan historian, that "the enmity of the Christians towards each other surpassed the fury of savage beasts against men." And a Christian Bishop (Greg. Nazianzen) pathetically laments "that the kingdom of heaven was converted by discord into the image of chaos, of a nocturnal tempest, and of hell itself."

But, as we have already stated, this was not the true Church of Christ. It was a Church, whose clergy are represented by the celebrated Athanasius, as "wandering round the empire in *search of the true faith*, exciting the contempt and laughter of the unbelieving world." It is the Church spoken of by Gibbon, when he says, (iii. 480), "In the long period of 1200 years which elapsed between the reign of Constantine and the Reformation of Luther, the worship of saints and relics corrupted the pure and perfect simplicity of the Christian model." The *silence* in heaven then, certainly did not signify any silence or peace in the visible Church. Neither did it signify peace or silence in the Empire, as the most able commentator on the Apocalypse has laboriously attempted to prove. He indeed acknowledges that it was interrupted by the Gothic invasion during the reign of the Emperor Valens: but it had been interrupted *before*, by the bloody disputes among the sons of Constantine; by the Persian war—the usurpation of Magnentius—the inroads of the Sarmatians—the wars with the Gauls—the rebellion and apostasy of Julian—his invasion of Persia, and the disasters which followed his death. And after the Gothic war and the defeat of Valens, the empire was convulsed by the conflicts which followed the successive usurpations of Maximus and Eugenius. The period, therefore, of about 70 years, which intervened between the death of Constantine and that of Theodosius, instead of being prefigured by "the silence in heaven of about the space of half an hour"—seems rather to be symbolized by the "fire cast upon the earth, when there were voices and thunderings and lightnings and an earthquake." The earthquake was literal, indeed, as well as figurative. On the 21st July 365, it is recorded,

that the greatest part of the Roman world was shaken by a violent and destructive earthquake. In Asia it is said 150 cities were ruined ; and in the city of Alexandria alone, 50,000 persons lost their lives. And the terrified subjects of Rome, says Gibbon, were disposed to confound the symptoms of a declining empire and a sinking world.

The silence mentioned in the text has been read by some as if it had been *before* the opening of the seal : and referred to the four angels holding the four winds that they should not blow on the earth. But this seems to me a forced construction of the passage ; and I believe that its true meaning is the most natural and the most literal ;—that there was silence *after* the seal was opened— a solemn pause in heaven—as if God was yet suspending the judgments about to descend on a corrupt Church and a guilty world :— still waiting to be gracious, if peradventure some tokens of repentance might be shewn ; as he delayed the punishment of his ancient but apostate people, saying, (Hos. xi. 8) “How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee, Israel ? How shall I make thee as Admah, and set thee as Zeboim ? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.”—(Jer. v. 1) “See now, if ye can find a man that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon.”—But “they set their face as a rock and refused to return.”

Now, therefore, the preparations for judgment commenced. “I saw,” says John, “the seven angels which stood before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.” (ver. 2.) The seventh seal, it will be observed, is of much longer duration than any of the former. It comprehends, indeed, seven periods, distinguished by the sounding of seven trumpets ; and under the seventh trumpet seven vials were to be poured out. And then cometh the end.

The seven angels were of the highest rank, indicated by the expression, they “stood before God ;”—like the seven princes of Persia which saw the king’s face and sat first in his kingdom. *Trumpets* were much used among the Jews ; to proclaim the festivals and the changing periods of time ; but especially were they used in war, to give notice of an approaching foe, or to prepare

the army for battle. As symbols for announcing war, they seem generally used in the Apocalypse; and in one passage they also mark to the Church the successive periods of time until her redemption draweth nigh. For the angel tells St. John, that "in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." (x. 7.)

In the sounding of the seven trumpets and the pouring out of the vials which accompanied the seventh, some commentators have observed a remarkable analogy to the circumstances attending the destruction of Jericho. On six successive days seven priests with seven trumpets and all the armed men compassed the city once on each day—the priests blowing the trumpets, and the host keeping silence. On the seventh day they compassed the city seven times, and at the seventh circuit the people shouted while the trumpets sounded, and the walls fell down flat to the ground. So the people of God, it is observed, seem to keep silence during the sounding of the seven Apocalyptic trumpets—*until* the pouring out of the last of the seven vials. *Then* the Apostle hears the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Alleluia, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." And as the downfall of Jericho marked the entrance of the Israelites into the promised land, so will the destruction of Babylon and her supporters mark the commencement of the reign of Christ upon the earth.

Such analogies are not to be entirely overlooked. Sometimes they illustrate an obscure passage or confirm a doubtful meaning: but they require great judgment in the application, for many analogies are more ingenious than satisfactory.

The difference in the nature of the events prefigured by the opening of the seals, and those ushered in by the sounding of the trumpets, is marked with precision and distinctness in the choice of the symbols employed. The opening of the first six seals discloses what is taking place in the Roman empire, by the instrumentality of the emperors and their subordinate officers. No foreign agency is introduced: there is no need to call the actors from a distance. But the employment of a *trumpet* conveys the very idea of sounding

an alarm to those at a distance—of rousing to action those who are out of sight. The sound of the trumpet, says Jeremiah, is the alarm of war, (iv. 19.) And when we come to examine the historical fulfilment of the first six trumpet symbols, we shall find that this actually took place: the agents employed came from beyond the boundaries of the Roman earth; they were *foreigners*, employed by the Lord of hosts to execute his vengeance on a people who acknowledged Him with their lips, but whose heart was set on idols;—they were Goths, Vandals, Huns, Saracens, and Turks, who carried fire and sword through every portion of the Roman empire. But before these actors are called upon the stage, before the first trumpet sounds, "Another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake." (ver. 3—5.)

We are reminded by this vision of Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, "whose lot it was, according to the custom of the priest's office, to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense." (Luke i. 9—11.) In these acts of worship, the prayers of the people in the temple court ascended to heaven, while the priest in the holy place offered the incense;—shewing, that the prayers of the people then, as now, were acceptable to God only when offered up in the name, and by the mediation of Jesus, our great High Priest,—of whom all the priests under the law were only types. And in heaven, Jesus is yet the Mediator of his people. "We have an Advocate (an intercessory Priest) with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

In the second chapter of the Revelation (ver. 8), the twenty-four elders are represented as having "golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints:" but here the incense is said to be "*added* to the prayers of the saints," as if it were figurative of something beside. And so this figure is used by Saint Paul, when he calls the gifts he had received from the Philippians "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God." (iv. 18); and he exhorts the Hebrews "to do good and to communicate, for with such sacrifices God is well-pleased." (xiii. 16). "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love," he adds in another place. (vi. 10). The sincerity of prayer is thus manifested by the fruits of the Spirit: and good works, which prove our faith, mingling with the desires of the heart, are presented by the angel in the same censer before the throne.

But after this was done, "the angel filled the censer with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth." This has been explained as signifying that only from the sealed ones—the representatives of the true Church—did prayers ascend to God through Jesus Christ: the rest of the earth had forsaken the Lord. The history of the times fully justifies this explanation. Before the end of the fourth century, the Church had apostatized—Christianity and Paganism were reconciled. Saint and martyr-worship had come into vogue; and "it was inculcated, that prayer was never so efficacious as when offered at the tomb of some saint." And a contemporary pagan exclaimed, "These are the gods that the earth produces in our days—the martyrs are the supreme arbitrators of our prayers to the Deity!"

"*Shall not I visit* for these things, saith the Lord; shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" Yes, verily; forbearance had its limits. And, as in the case of Jerusalem, when God was about to destroy it, Ezekiel saw the man clothed in linen "take coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city,"—so, when the angel in like manner had cast the fire from his censer into the earth, immediately there were "voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake."

The historical fulfilment of these symbols I have already shewn, in the disorders and calamities that befel the Roman empire during the interval which elapsed from the establishment of Christianity under Constantine to the death of Theodosius. The fierce disputes between the Arians and Catholics, the tumults of religious intolerance and fanaticism, the incessant and senseless clamour of heretic and orthodox, were pointedly prefigured by the *voices* in the vision. The thunderings and lightnings were symbolical of the civil commotions and foreign wars which obscured and agitated the political atmosphere; and the decisive victory of the Goths in the year 378, when the Emperor Valens and the flower of the Roman army perished in the fatal battle of Adrianople, realized the earthquake which shook the empire throughout its vast circumference.

“And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon a third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.” (ver. 7—12.)

Nearly all commentators are agreed on the period of time indicated by the successive soundings of the first four trumpets. It occupies the space of about 150 years—from the death of Theodosius the Great to the total extinction of the Roman power in the West; but

great diversity of opinion exists regarding the *details* of each separate vision—the localities where they occurred, and the space which each occupies in the history of the world. The arrangement adopted by Elliott seems so satisfactory, and embraces so fully every incident in the prophecy, that I shall content myself with briefly quoting his explanation. He shews that the marked phraseology employed in the first three trumpet visions—"the third part of the trees and of the land"—"the third part of the sea"—"the third part of the rivers"—point out the right particular application of each one of the visions, to the one particular irruption of the Goths really corresponding. The *third part*, meaning the third part according to that division of the empire which was made in the time of Constantine, and which afterwards was known as the Western empire. The Eastern empire being the second third; and the remaining portion, the vast Illyrian Prefecture, the provinces bordering on the Danube and extending to Greece, which was afterwards divided between the Eastern and Western empires, and in the time of Theodosius was partially occupied by the Gothic nations. We also find this remarkable coincidence between the cessation of the Gothic ravages and the fourth trumpet vision, that whereas those well-known symbols of rulers, the sun and other heavenly luminaries, are represented in the text as being darkened; so history informs us that the rulers of the Western empire—the *third part* of the original Roman earth—were actually dethroned and extinguished.

It was therefore against the Western empire that the four trumpets sounded an "an alarm of war." The death of Theodosius was the signal for the bursting into action of the Gothic woe. "He died in January 395, and before the end of winter the Goths were in arms. Their farms," says Gibbon, "were instantly deserted, they resumed arms at the first sound of the trumpet." From the frozen regions of the north, in a winter of such severity as to make the ice-bound Danube passable by their ponderous waggons, their countrymen from the Dacian forests joined them. Their object was the desolation of the Empire. They declared

Alaric their chieftain. He led them first against the peninsula of Greece. "The deep and bloody traces of their march could be traced by the traveller," we are told, "many years afterwards." By the infatuation of the Emperor Arcadius, the Gothic chieftain was afterwards made Master-General of the Eastern Illyricum. There, seated in authority, on the verge of the two empires, he meditated on which of the separated halves he should fall. His destiny was to the west and Italy. "He felt," as he afterwards declared, "a secret and preternatural impulse, which directed and even impelled his march to the gates of Rome." Terrible omens and prognostications preceded him. "The Christians (says Gibbon) derived comfort from the powerful intercession of the saints and martyrs." But this was the very cause, as we have seen prefigured in the Apocalypse, of the coming judgments. Thrice he descended from the Alps on the Italian plains, marking his footsteps in country and town with ravage, conflagration and blood—till the gates of Rome itself were opened to the conqueror, and the Goths marched through the city by the light of the flames they had kindled. In the meantime other destroyers had extended their ravages over the devoted Western Empire. Rhadagaisus, from the far north of Germany, with his host of Vandals, Suevi, and Burgundians, burst, says Gibbon, "like a dark thunder cloud on the Rhetian and Italian valleys." They were repulsed near Florence, and bent their course westward, overwhelming the flourishing provinces of Gaul and Spain. Blood and fire marked their footsteps. The burning of trees and herbage, as well as cities, is pathetically noted by the chronicles of the time. "The consuming flames of war," says Gibbon, "spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greatest part of Gaul. Scenes of peace and plenty were changed into a desert; and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man." Similar was the desolation of Spain; and the desolators entered never to retire. "This passage of the Rhine," adds Gibbon, "may be considered as the fall of the Roman empire in the countries beyond the Alps. The barriers which had so long separated the

savage and the civilized nations of the earth, were from that fatal moment levelled with the ground."

The era of the first trumpet, that of Alaric and Rhadagaisus lasted about 16 years; from 395 to 410. In that latter year the Vandals had extended their conquests to the Straits of Gibraltar; and Alaric, who had penetrated to the most southern coast of Italy, —while meditating more extensive ravages, was suddenly arrested by the hand of death; and the massacre of the prisoners employed in constructing his sepulchre, was the last Italian blood mingled with the fire and the hail prefigured in the first trumpet.

Though men were employed as the agents in this and the succeeding judgments of the Almighty, yet they were as much under his control, and came as exactly at his appointed time, as when Moses stretched forth his rod toward heaven, "and the Lord sent forth thunder and hail, and the fire ran along upon the ground; so there was hail, and fire mingled with hail, very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation." The destructive effects of the literal hail and fire in Egypt may help us to understand the meaning of the judgment intended by the remarkably similar but figurative language of the Apocalypse, in the description of the first trumpet vision. It may also teach us how the wrath of man is restrained or directed, by the hand of Him who doeth according to His will in heaven above and in the earth beneath—confounding the wisdom of the wise, and accomplishing His purposes by ways and means which are alike unexpected and overwhelming.

"Thy wisdom scatters, Lord most high,
What human prudence would combine:
Thy power upraises to the sky,
What some in fetters would confine:
Man, reading not thy perfect will,
Walketh in some vain shadow still."

LECTURE V.

THE SOUNDING OF THE SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH TRUMPETS.—
GENSERIC THE VANDAL.—ATTILA THE HUN.—THE BARBARIANS IN
ITALY.—ODOACER.—THEODORIC.—PROCLAMATION OF COMING WOES.
—FOREBODINGS IN THE CHURCH.—POPE GREGORY I.—THE COMING
OF ANTICHRIST.—REVELATION VIII. 8—13.

THE scene of the first trumpet-vision was “the *earth*”—on which descended a storm of hail and fire mingled with blood, destroying the third part of the trees and grass: prefiguring, as was shewn, the incursions of the Goths from the north and north-east, who precipitated themselves on the western portion of the Roman empire, ravaging Italy, Gaul, and Spain.

The second trumpet sounds, and the Apostle sees a burning mountain cast into the *sea*—indicating a distinct locality from that of the action of the first trumpet. And in the third trumpet-vision, the *scene* as well as the *symbol* is again changed—a burning star, or blazing meteor, falls upon the *rivers* and *fountains of waters*.

We have already considered the singular propriety of the figurative language of the first trumpet-vision, as fulfilled in the events which occurred in the western third of the Roman empire, during the interval which elapsed between the death of Theodosius the Great, and that of Alaric the Goth,—a period of time not exceeding sixteen years. The western division, the original third of the empire as it existed under Constantine, is still the grand theatre on which are exhibited the judgments of the Lord, during the sounding of the three following Apocalyptic trumpets.

Our attention will afterwards be called to the remarkable similarity of the language and figures used by the Holy Spirit in shadowing out to St. John, for the instruction of the Church, similar judgments which would come upon the same portion of

the world;—when THE VIALS of God's wrath should be poured out on the *earth*, on the *sea*, and on the *rivers* and *fountains of water*. But though these events are similar in language, in locality, and in effects, they are widely apart in the paging of the world's history. The first three Trumpets were heard sounding in the fourth and fifth centuries. The first three Vials were poured out during the sixteenth and seventeenth. The one commenced soon after the establishment of Christianity by the Roman emperors; the other soon after its reformation and re-establishment in the time of Luther: as I trust to be able to shew when we come to the consideration of the 16th chapter. I call attention to it *now*, that you may examine for yourselves what St. John says of the pouring out of the vials, and compare the figurative prophecy with the recorded history of the world from the era of the Reformation to the present day. I do this, partly because some commentators believe that the trumpets and the vials synchronize with each other; but chiefly, because the vials belong to the age in which we now live; that they prefigure events which are being rapidly disclosed; and that the seventh angel will suddenly pour out his vial into the air,—when the great voice which St. John heard from the temple saying "*It is done,*" will echo through earth and heaven.

In the second trumpet-vision, a burning mountain is thrown into the *sea*,—prefiguring the devastation of the *sea coasts* and *islands* of the third part of the Roman empire. And this was fulfilled in a precise and wonderful manner by the Vandals, under Genseric; "a name," as Gibbon observes, "which, in the destruction of the Roman empire, has deserved an equal rank with the names of Alaric and Attila." In the year 428 he acquired the dignity of King, and accepted the invitation of Count Boniface, the governor of Africa, to join him in his contemplated revolt against the Emperor Valentinian. The ships which the Vandals found in the harbours of Spain, had already carried them to the islands of Majorca and Minorca, and now formed part of the fleet which transported them across the Straits of Gibraltar to the coast of Africa. They were joined by bands of the savage Moors and the

persecuted Donatists. And "on a sudden," says Gibbon, "the seven fruitful provinces from Tangier to Tripoli, were overwhelmed by the invasion of the Vandals,—whose destructive rage seldom gave quarter,"—and who "expiated the death of their countrymen by the ruin of the cities under whose walls they had fallen." Like the destructive course of a torrent of burning lava, they even extirpated, it is said, the olives and other fruit trees of the country. Carthage and Hippo were taken and plundered by the licentious troops of Genseric in 439, and the territory he had conquered extended above ninety days' journey along the African coast. But he found the interior a desert, and resolved to create a naval power which should render every maritime country accessible to his arms. "And," says Gibbon, "after an interval of six centuries, the fleets that issued from the ports of Carthage again claimed the empire of the Mediterranean." When the formidable navy of Genseric was ready to sail, he was asked by his pilot what course he should steer: "Leave the determination to the winds," he replied, "*they* will transport us to the guilty coast, whose inhabitants have provoked the Divine vengeance." The barbarian king seemed conscious of the mission to which he had been appointed by the decrees of heaven. And well he fulfilled it. The fiery streams from the burning Vandal mountain were poured with devastating fury on the coasts of Spain, Italy, Greece, and Sicily,—the islands of the Mediterranean were subdued or plundered,—and terror or desolation spread from the columns of Hercules to the mouths of the Nile.

The sea, according to the prophetic vision, became the theatre of war during this period of the Roman history. "The third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of those who lived in it, (or on its coasts) died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." The Romans with incredible labour had collected a fleet of 300 large vessels, besides a number of transports; but Genseric surprised them in the bay of Carthage, —many were sunk, taken, or burnt; and, says the historian, "the preparations of three years were destroyed in a single day." Afterwards the Romans attempted to retrieve their misfortunes, and despatched an armament of 1100

ships, and above 100,000 men against Carthage, the capital of the Vandals,—and again Genseric surprised them. As the vessels lay at anchor in the bay of Bona, he sent against them a number of fire-ships, and then attacking them while in remediless confusion, gained a complete and decisive victory. Till his death he remained the tyrant of the Mediterranean. In one of his marauding expeditions he took the city of Rome itself; and pillaged it for fourteen days. Among the valuable and venerable plunder were the Jewish seven-branched golden candlestick, and the golden table, which Titus had taken from the temple of Jerusalem and afterwards deposited in the temple of Peace. But it is said, that the vessel which transported those sacred relics was the only one that suffered shipwreck when returning from this expedition.

Our own island of Britain did not escape the judgments inflicted on the western empire, of which it formed a part. The Romans, who were hard pressed at home, withdrew their legions in the year 448, after an occupation of about 400 years. The northern tribes immediately attacked the defenceless and enervated Britons, laying the southern portion of the island waste with fire and sword. In their distress they applied to Rome for help, in a letter which they entitled "The Groans of the Britons."—"The barbarians," they said, "chase us to the sea, and the sea throws us back on the barbarians;—we have only the hard choice left of perishing by the waves or the sword." But the Romans could give no help—and the Britons were obliged to call the Saxons to their aid. This warlike race from the north of Germany soon drove back the Caledonian invaders, and took possession of the country for themselves;—eventually confining the Britons to Cornwall and the mountains of Wales. No part, therefore, of the sea-coast, or of the islands in the sea, belonging to the western empire, not even the most remote, escaped that visitation of *blood* which was prefigured in the vision, when the second angel sounded his trumpet.

When the third trumpet sounded, "there fell a great star from heaven burning as it were a lamp (or a burning meteor), and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of

waters." The scene is now changed from the sea to the land—from the coast to the interior of the western empire. This vision seems to have been fulfilled in the ravages of Attila, the king of the Huns—and, as he called himself, "the Scourge of God." He united under his sway the two mighty kingdoms of Germany and Scythia. He was feared as something greater than human; and the barbaric princes who waited upon him could not presume to gaze with steady eye on what they deemed his *divine majesty*. "He was," says a distinguished writer, "in their eyes like a meteor of the heavens." And meteor-like was his course athwart the western provinces of the empire. In the year 450, with 500,000 men, he crossed the Rhine at Basle, and thence tracing the course of that river downward to Belgium, he made its valley one scene of desolation and woe. On leaving the valley of the Rhine, he advanced into the interior, but was repulsed in the tremendous battle of Chalons, in which fell above 160,000 men.* Attila then retraced his steps, to fall on another destined scene of ravage,—"*the fountains of waters*," in the Alpine valleys of Italy—burning the cities, massacring the inhabitants, and laying the country waste. All was slaughter, despair, or flight. He marched on Rome, and nothing seemed to stand between it and utter destruction,—when the venerable bishop, Pope Leo the First, at the head of the Roman ambassadors, went out to meet him, and succeeded in deprecating his wrath with promises and presents. Attila granted the Romans peace, and re-crossed the Alps. On returning to his own country, he was suddenly cut off in the year 453. The meteor was extinct, but its predicted course had been accomplished.

It is added, as a peculiarity in this trumpet-vision, distinguishing it from the previous plagues which had afflicted this third part of the earth, that the *star* was called *Wormwood*, embittering the waters and causing death to many. This has been interpreted as

* After the battle of Chalons, on perceiving the retreat of Torismond, king of the Visigoths, Attila exclaimed, "A star is falling before me, and the earth trembling. Lo, I am the hammer of the world!"

denoting the famine, disease, and pestilence, that usually follow the track of a conqueror,—and especially followed the desolating progress of Attila. It is stated also, that a rivulet traversing the plain on which was fought the terrible battle alluded to above, “was swollen by blood into the appearance of a torrent, and that those who were tormented by thirst and the fever of their wounds, drank blood from its channel.”

But the term *wormwood* appears to me to have a farther and more significant meaning. It is used in various places of scripture in connection with idolatry or apostasy. Thus Moses, in Deuteronomy (xxix. 18), exhorting the Israelites to make a covenant with the Lord, warns them against man, woman, or family, whose heart “turneth away from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and *wormwood*.” So also the apostle Paul exhorts the Hebrews (xii. 15) to “look diligently lest any man fall from the grace of God; lest any root of *bitterness* springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.” In like manner, the false prophets are threatened by Jeremiah (xxiii. 15), “I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of gall.” And the people of Judea, whom they had deceived, thus complain, “The Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of *gall* to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord. We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble.” (Jer. viii. 14.) These passages clearly shew, that idolatry and apostasy result in bitter disappointment and spiritual death. Their fruits are wormwood and gall.

Now Attila, the king of the Huns, who seems to be the chief agent employed in this trumpet-vision, is distinguished from his predecessors, in the two previous judgments, by his religion. Alaric and Genseric were nominally Christians, but Attila was a Pagan; and his great object was the overthrow of Christianity and the establishment of an Anti-Christian universal empire. In this he well nigh succeeded. His empire was to be built upon the worship of the *sword-god* Mars. The *sword* which he wore was

the visible symbol of his God; and to it were offered up human sacrifices, consisting of Christians whom he had captured in war. It was thus many drunk of the bitter cup of Paganism. But the Christians did not unite against him, as might have been expected—many joined him, and helped forward his design. Some, because of the sectarian hatred which distinguished those ages—some because of their secret leaning towards the old Pagan rites—and others in consequence of the very general expectation of the termination of the Roman empire, and the immediate revelation of Antichrist, which marked the era of Attila. But all these various parties, as well as his own Hunnish and Pagan adherents, were doomed to bitter disappointment;—to them it was wormwood and gall* when Attila, almost without a cause, commenced his retreat from Italy, and in a few months afterwards, was numbered with the dead. “The establishment of his government over the habitable world,” says the late learned Dean of Manchester, “was inconsistent with the spread of Christianity; and the Almighty will, which had sent him as a scourge on the population of the Roman empire, permitted him not to complete the overthrow of true religion; but annihilated, by his decease, the great fabric he had constructed, which was immediately dissolved by internal conflict in the absence of his absolute and decisive authority. The mighty one was gathered to his fathers; the power of the Huns, which had shed a *baleful and meteorous gleam* over the age in which he lived, was speedily obscured; their generation was lost, and their name extinguished.”†

“But,” says Gibbon, “if all the barbarian conquerors had been annihilated in the same hour, their total destruction would not

* “And the Lord saith, Because they have forsaken my law which I set before them, and have not obeyed my voice, neither walked therein; but have walked after the imagination of their own heart, and after Baalim, which their fathers taught them: therefore thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will feed them, even this people, with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink.”—Jeremiah ix. 13, 14, 15.

† “Attila, King of the Huns, by the Hon. and Rev. W. Herbert, 1838.”

have restored the empire of the West; and if Rome still survived, she survived the loss of freedom, of virtue, and of honour." Her provinces had been rent away one after another—the territory yet remaining had become like a desert; and little remained but the vain titles and symbols of sovereignty—and these too were withdrawn within thirty years after the death of Attila.

This is prefigured under the sounding of the fourth trumpet,—“the third part of the sun was smitten and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.”

The propriety of applying these symbols to kings and rulers of states, has already been shewn by reference to other passages of holy writ. The passage before us received a complete fulfilment in the events which took place in the western empire. In 476, Odoacer, chief of the Heruli, (one of the bands that had followed the standard of Attila), established a military authority in Italy, and resolved to abolish the useless and expensive office of Emperor of the West. The authorities bowed in submission before him, and Romulus Augustulus, the last emperor, signified his resignation. “The senate, in their own name, and that of the people, consented that the seat of universal empire should be transferred from Rome to Constantinople, and basely renounced the right of choosing their master. They humbly requested that the Emperor of the East would invest Odoacer with the title of Patrician, and the administration of the diocese of Italy.” “Thus,” says Elliott, “of the imperial *sun* the third which appertained to the western empire was eclipsed, and shone no more. In the west the night had fallen.” Notwithstanding this, however, it must be borne in mind, that the authority of the Roman name had not yet entirely ceased. The Senate of Rome continued to assemble as usual. The Consuls were appointed yearly—one by the Eastern emperor, one by Italy and Rome. Odoacer himself governed Italy under the title conferred on him by the Eastern emperor. And, as regarded the more distant western provinces, or at least considerable dis-

tricts of them, the tie which had united them to the Roman empire was not altogether severed. There was still a faint recognition of the supreme imperial authority. The moon and stars might seem still to shine on the west with a dim reflected light. In the course of the events, however, which rapidly followed, one after the other, in the next half century, these too were extinguished. Theodoric the Ostrogoth, on destroying the Heruli and their kingdom, ruled in Italy from the year 493 to 526 as an independent sovereign. And when Belisarius conquered the Ostrogoths, the Roman senate was dissolved, and the consulship abrogated. The independence of the barbaric princes of the western provinces became more distinctly averred and understood; and after above one hundred and fifty years of unexampled calamities, the western empire, to use a figure of St. Jerome's, became like "a trunk without a head."

"About the close of the sixth century," says Gibbon, "amidst the arms of the Lombards and the despotism of the Greeks, Rome had reached the lowest period of her depression. By the removal of the seat of empire, and the successive loss of the provinces, the sources of public and private opulence were exhausted; the lofty tree, under whose shade the nations of the earth had reposed, was deprived of its leaves and branches, and the sapless trunk was left to wither on the ground." The same death-like condition of the empire is indicated in the 13th chapter of the Apocalypse—where it is represented under the personification of a *beast* having one of its heads *wounded to death by a sword—YET IT LIVED*. Its revival, under a new aspect, and as it were with a *new head*, we shall have occasion to consider hereafter—when a history and a fate will be found attaching to it, more singular and more awful than that which we have already traced.

For a while, however, the prophetic scene shifts to the *eastward*, and we are called upon to behold the judgments of God fulfilling there also.

The visions in which the succeeding judgments are prefigured, are introduced by forewarnings of coming woe. "I beheld," says St. John, "and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven,

saying with a loud voice, Woe, Woe, Woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" (ch. viii. 13.)

Whenever the Lord is about to bring his terrible judgments on the earth, to overthrow kingdoms and uproot powerful nations, he gives such warnings—by express declarations, or by undefined apprehensions, shadowing out the coming calamities—as cannot fail to impress the minds of men. The mission of Jonah to Nineveh is a memorable instance. Such also were the denunciations of Jeremiah previous to the first destruction of Jerusalem; and when none of the people regarded, he appealed to the land itself, exclaiming, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." Before the final destruction of Jerusalem, not only did our Lord while on earth weep over the city, and warn the Jews of the coming desolation,—but he raised up a man, who for above seven years ceased not to cry day and night, "Woe! woe! unto Jerusalem." "Thus he continued his wail," says Josephus, "neither did his voice become feeble nor did he grow weary, until, during the siege, after beholding his presages verified, he ceased. For, as he was going his round on the wall, crying with a piercing voice 'Woe! woe! once more to the city, to the people, and to the temple;' when at last he had added, 'Woe! woe! to myself also,' he was struck by a stone shot from the ballista, and killed upon the spot." On this the historian remarks, "If we reflect on these events, we shall find that God exercises care over men, in every way foreshewing to their race the means of safety: but that they perish through their own folly and self-incurred evils."

So we shall find that God left not the world unwarned, during that period of time which intervened between the extinction of the old government at Rome and the rise of Mohamed and the Saracens, who effected such a remarkable change in the political and religious aspect of a great portion of the world. During this interval, of nearly fifty years,—from 565 to 610—there was a general forebod-

* Josephus, vol. ii., B. vi., c. v. Ed. 1851.

ing and fear, and solemn prognostications throughout the whole of Christendom; of the approach of an awful crisis. St. Paul had foretold the *coming of Antichrist*; "but," he adds, "ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time: he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way." From Apostolic times, all the Fathers had construed this *let* and *hindrance* to Antichrist's manifestation, as the then existing empire of Rome. "We pray for the emperors and the empire of Rome," said Tertullian, "for we know that convulsions and calamities, threatening the whole world, and the end of the world itself, are kept back by the intervention of the Roman empire." "Things will ere long totter and fall," said Lactantius; "only while the city of Rome is safe, there seems reason not to apprehend it. For that is the state which as yet props up all things." Similar expressions are found in the writings of other Fathers who lived during the fourth and fifth centuries.

When therefore every vestige of Rome's imperial ruling power had been swept away, there seemed scarce room for doubting that the crisis had arrived, and that the awful events and judgments so long anticipated were indeed at hand.

There was also a *chronological* characteristic of the era, that tended not a little to confirm these gloomy forebodings. Not among the Christians only, but among Jews also, the idea was entertained, that the seventh millenary was to be the millennium of the triumph of the Church—a triumph to be preceded by the last grand outbreak of evil under Antichrist, and the destruction of the world. It was under this conviction, that Hippolytus, the bishop and martyr, (whose works and life have lately been published by the Chevalier Bunsen), predicted that the world would *end* in the year of our Lord 500. Others entertained the same opinion; because, according to the Septuagint chronology, 6000 years from the creation would then have elapsed. And even when the year 500 had passed, and the consummation came not, many still believed it was at hand—that there had been some *error* in the calculation;

L

and they looked forward with awful expectations to the close of the sixth century.

The outward aspect of affairs heightened the gloom of such prognostications. In the *West*, the Lombards, a fresh and barbarous Gothic tribe from the Danube, in the year 570, seized upon Italy, and established an independent kingdom—which embraced nearly the whole country, with the exception of Rome. In the *East*, the Avar Tartars had advanced nearly to the boundaries of the empire, and seemed ready to burst upon it like a dark thunder cloud. The inflictions of God also were more alarming than those of man. The historian commemorates the comets, earthquakes, and plagues which astonished and afflicted the age of Justinian. "In his reign," says Procopius, "one hundred millions of the human race were exterminated by war, pestilence, and famine."

Pope Gregory the First, who has been called the last of the good and the first of the bad Popes, and who reigned from the year 590 to 604, has left his forebodings on record. He believed that the Roman empire was within a finger's breadth of its ruin, and participating in the idea that it was only to end with the world's end, he came to the conviction that the *last judgment* was at hand. In many of his letters he expressed this conviction. The weight of such declarations from such a man, and at such a time, could not fail to impress the whole Christian world. We must remember too, that the Pope's *letters missive* were at that time the most diffusive as well as the most influential mode of publication. "Throughout the whole of Christendom," says Elliott, "from England to Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria, his warning voice was directed, charged with presage of the dreaded evil." It was, indeed, like the angel flying in mid-heaven, and crying, "Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the judgments about to come." We have a specimen of his warnings in a letter he wrote to king Ethelbert of England: "We know from the word of Almighty God," he says, "that the end of the world is at hand, and the reign of the saints which shall have no end. In the approach of which consummation, all nature must

expect to be disordered; seasons deranged, wars raging, and famines, and earthquakes, and pestilences." "If not in our days," he adds, "we must expect it in those following." Nor did he omit to warn the world that *Antichrist* also was at hand. When the title of *Universal Bishop* was assumed by the Patriarch of Constantinople, Gregory raised against it the most solemn protestations. He declared, that whoever, in his elation of spirit, called himself, or sought to be called, *Universal Bishop* or *Universal Priest*, that man was the likeness, the precursor, and the preparer for Antichrist;—that he bore the same characteristic of boundless pride; that the tendency of his assumption was the same as Antichrist's, viz. to withdraw the members of the Church from its only true Head, Jesus Christ, and to attach them to himself instead. And in his letters, he states, that he regards the title of *Universal Bishop* as the name of blasphemy connected with the ten-horned beast in the Apocalypse. It is very remarkable, that though the Patriarchs of Constantinople renounced the ominous title, yet it was assumed by the Pope of Rome in the year 606, only two years after Gregory's death, and has been retained by the Popes ever since.

But, notwithstanding all these forebodings on the part of both priests and people, the great Apostasy in the Church went on increasing—new superstitions and corruptions were added to the old, and the old became more deeply rooted and confirmed. *Miracles* were now ascribed to the relics of saints, and their pictures and images were worshipped in the churches. "To them," says Gibbon, "incense was offered, and fervent prayers were directed." The doctrine of *Purgatory* also was now brought into the Church, and with the practice of *private confession* and *indulgences*, added immensely to the power of the clergy. The priests thus became masters of the conscience of the living, and were believed to have power over the fate of the dead.

These things must have seemed to the few faithful Christians who lived in those days, as calling for the vengeance of heaven—and as constituting, by their blasphemous assumption, a forewarning cry

of woe against an apostate Church and world. But the *three-fold* woe-denouncing cry of the angel, would to them also serve to dispel much of what was erroneous in the forebodings of others. For if the woes were *successive*, the *last judgment* could not be at hand. There was a notification of three trumpets yet to sound, ere the term of probation and long suffering should be fully ended, and the consummation of the world ensue.

The first two woes refer especially to the *eastern part* of Christendom, which, though equally guilty with the *west*, had hitherto escaped comparatively unscathed. But the explanation of the visions in which they are embodied, and the history of their fulfilment, in the attacks of the Saracens upon the Eastern empire, and afterwards in its total subversion by the Turks, must be postponed until our next Lecture.

“Meanwhile our lot is fall’n in pleasant places,
A goodly heritage we have indeed ;
The Lamb to follow and shew forth his praises,
And in his footsteps with his flock to tread :
May we, by no false doctrines drawn aside,
Maintain our part with him and with his chosen bride.”

LECTURE VI.

THE SOUNDING OF THE FIFTH TRUMPET.—EXPLANATION OF SYMBOLS.
—MOHAMED.—HIS DOCTRINES.—HIS LOCUST-LIKE FOLLOWERS.—
THEIR POWER AND PROGRESS.—THE CHRISTIAN IDOLATERS.—RE-
VELATION IX. 1—12.

THE subject of the present Lecture is in the ninth chapter, and embraces the leading events which took place in the Eastern Roman empire,—extending over a period of 150 years. By these events a more decided change was effected in the political and religious aspect of that part of the world; than by those even which overturned the empire in the West.

These events, as well as all others affecting the fate of nations, seem to be produced *naturally*, from the passions, the policy, or the fatuity of man. But the hearts of kings are in the hand of God, and he turneth them as the rivers of waters. He sees the end from the beginning, and raises up and employs instruments for the accomplishment of his own purposes: and while men imagine they are carrying out their selfish schemes of ambition or revenge, they are all-unconscious of the designs of the Omniscient Ruler, who impels and directs, or controls and stops them in their course. This doctrine is clearly intimated in the Apocalypse, as well as the foreknowledge by which God shewed to his servant the things which should come to pass.

These things were revealed to St. John in the *order* in which they should occur in the history of the world; for our God is a God of order. They were exhibited, not in detail, but by *pictorial representations*, and brief but explicit explanations, of the leading points; or rather, the grand result of each series of events was described, constituting what may be called a campaign in the course of Time. But these leading incidents or culminating points in

the distinct but successive periods of history, which were exhibited to the Apostle in the prophetic panorama, refer not to changes in the world at large, but only to that portion of it which embraced the Church, or what is usually termed *Christendom*; because it is only in and through the Church that God's purposes of love and mercy will be accomplished.

As the Old Testament prophecies refer to the Jewish Church, and only to other nations as subordinate to it—as they happened to be employed for the punishment or the assistance of the Israelitish nation,—so we find this to be the case also in the Apocalypse. The people of God, really or professedly, constituting the Christian Church, occupy the chief attention of the Spirit of prophecy; other nations are referred to, and some are occasionally introduced, as employed by God for the overthrow of his enemies, or the punishment of apostasy. Such were the Goths, Vandals, and Huns, who destroyed, as we have seen, the Roman empire in the West, and were afterwards absorbed into the outward Church of God. Such are also the Saracenic or Turkish nations, who were employed to punish, and eventually to overturn the Eastern empire, and whose appointed mission is prefigured in the visions seen by St. John, on the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets. But these nations, and all others existing on the earth, are referred to, and will be concerned in the grand catastrophe, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ:

“For He shall reign where'er the sun
Doth his successive journeys run.”

Chapter IX. “And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.” (ver. 1—3.)

In this remarkable vision, John sees a star fall from heaven—

the bottomless pit opened—smoke ascending from it—and locusts issuing out of the smoke. A *STAR* is the usual symbol in the prophetic writings for a chief or ruler—whether civil or ecclesiastical,—as has already been shewn when speaking of the darkening of the moon and stars under the fourth trumpet-vision; and in the first chapter, where the “angels of the churches” are called *stars*. Angels of heaven are also referred to under the same figure, in the well-known passage—“the morning *stars* sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” And St. Jude calls the teachers of false and corrupt doctrine, “wandering *stars*, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.”

To such a star, “fallen from heaven to earth,” was given the “*KEY* of the bottomless pit.” A key is the symbol of power and authority. The prophet Isaiah (xxii. 22), says of Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah,—“the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open.” And a greater than Eliakim says of himself, “I have the *keys* of hell and of death.” The *key* of the bottomless pit, or of hell, is represented in the twentieth chapter, as delegated to an angel, who binds Satan in that prison for a thousand years. And Jesus delegated to the Apostles (Matt. xvi. 19) and to Peter by name, as the spokesman for the rest, the “*keys* of the kingdom of heaven,” that they might bind and loose on earth:—that is, the Apostles received *power* to teach and preach, and make laws for the government of the Church. Thus Peter, with his *key*, opened the door of the Church to the Gentiles, when he baptized Cornelius. So also the Apostles, by the same power, *loosed* the believers from the yoke of circumcision and the law; but *bound* them to “abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood.” And by the Apostolic Epistles, the Church is bound to the end of time. The *power of the keys*, is therefore equivalent to “*teaching with authority*,” which pre-eminently distinguished our Lord’s own ministry while on earth. He uses the same figure when denouncing the Jewish teachers, who had made the commandments of God of none effect (or *powerless*) by their traditions—teaching for doctrines the com-

mandments of men. "Woe unto you, ye lawyers, ye have taken away the *key of knowledge*: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

To this star in the Apocalypse, this ruler or teacher, is given power to open the bottomless pit. The place of punishment—the abode of fallen spirits—the head-quarters of Satan—is here referred to:—that fearful place into which Korah and his company went down quick—where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. When it was opened, the **SMOKE** from it is represented as ascending like the smoke of a great furnace, and darkening the sun and the air.

What are we to understand by the **SMOKE**? Jesus represents himself as the *light*—the true light from heaven, which lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. He is declared to be the *Sun of Righteousness*. His **DOCTRINE** was as the *light*,—shining into man's heart, and exhibiting the brightness of the Father's glory. The object of Satan is to obscure this glory; to darken the light that shines on the path to heaven; to raise a cloud between man and his Maker, by substituting something of his own in the place of simple obedience to the commands of God. In this he has been but too successful: from the day when he said to Eve in Paradise, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," to the day when he taught in England the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration.

False doctrines, therefore, emanating from Satan, obscuring the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and darkening the moral atmosphere—the mind and conscience of man,—we may conclude to be the true meaning of this "smoke out of the pit," in the vision before us. And history fully justifies this opinion: for, not many years after the destruction of the Western empire,—which (as we have seen) was prefigured by the previous trumpet-vision—**MOHAMED**, the great teacher of false doctrine in the East, made his appearance.

It was the commencement of the first *Woe*, announced by the flying angel.

Much learning has been expended in proving that Mohamed was a *fallen star*, in a political point of view: having been deprived,

on the death of his grandfather, of the chieftainship and authority to which by birth he was entitled; and also of the office of guardian of the Caaba, or holy place of his pagan ancestors. He was reduced to poverty; and, as servant to the widow Cadijah, he traded in the fairs of Damascus. In social life, therefore, he might with propriety be called a *fallen star*. But it is in his character of *teacher*, or *prophet*, that I think he was especially prefigured as a *star* fallen from *heaven*. The great object of his teaching was not to point out to men the way to heaven, but to obtain power and authority for himself on earth. His doctrines tend to foster the evil passions of men, instead of restraining them; and he promised heaven itself to prayers, to courage, to ferocity, to ambitious daring, rather than to meekness and mercy, to poverty of spirit and purity of heart. He proclaimed himself a prophet sent from God, but his teaching was earthly and sensual; he pretended to have received his commission from heaven, but, to use the remarkable words of one of his own followers, "he was an emissary from the armies of Satan."

In the secret cave of Hera, three miles from Mecca, says Gibbon, Mohamed consulted, year by year, "the spirit of fraud or of enthusiasm, whose abode was not in the heavens, but in the mind of the prophet." This cave has suggested itself to interpreters as the mouth of the pit of the abyss, whence the pestilential fumes and darkness were seen to arise. At length he began to declare his mission, first privately, and three years afterward publicly. For a while the elders of the city affected to despise the presumption of the aspiring prophet; but eventually they chased him from Mecca. His flight marks the Era of the Hegira. (The year of our Lord 622.) Mohamed took refuge in the city of Medina, where his doctrines were more favourably received. "The injustice of Mecca, (says Gibbon), and the choice of Medina, transformed the citizen into a prince, and the humble preacher into the leaders of armies." After an exile of seven years, he returned to Mecca; where, adds the historian, "the fugitive missionary was installed as the prince and the prophet of his native country." Thenceforward he propagated his doctrines at the point of the sword, and inspired his

M

followers with the most invincible courage and the most undaunted resolution, by proclaiming *heaven*, with all its voluptuous enjoyments as the immediate reward of those who fell in battle; while the flames of hell were reserved for the fainthearted and the coward. Tribe after tribe joined his standard, till the whole of Arabia acknowledged his sway. He then sent his armies against the Eastern Roman empire—subjugated Syria and Egypt, and extended his conquests over the greater part of Africa and the East. The religion he thus founded by the power of the sword has been permanent as its influence was extensive: and after an existence of above 1200 years, Mohamedanism is still professed by 100 millions of the human race. But the Mussulmans themselves believe that the Cross will finally prevail above the Crescent:—and traditions are current throughout the East, that the expiration of their power and their religion is at hand.

Thus, as the vision had foreshewn, *power*, indicated by the key, was given to the *fallen star*. His authority was firmly established, and his doctrines struck deep root into the earth.

In the Koran *the key of God* is asserted to have been given to Mohamed to open to believers the portals of the true religion and of heaven; and in another passage it is said, "God gave *his legate* the power of heaven which is above, and of the fire beneath: with the *key* did not he give him the title and power of a porter that he may open to those whom he hath chosen."* Hence the **KEY** was selected by his followers subsequently, both as a religious and a national emblem.

The promulgation and permanency of Mohamedanism is one of those mysterious facts which puzzle our limited understanding. "If this doctrine be of men," said Gamaliel, when the Apostles first preached the Gospel, "it will come to nought, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight against God." We know the invincibility of the Gospel, and accept Gamaliel's

* "The sword (says Mohamed) is the *key* of heaven and of hell."—Gibbon, ch. 50.

alternative as a proof that it is from God. But a Mohamedan with equal propriety may adopt the same test as a proof of the divinity of his creed. It has been permitted to remain until this day, for wise though inscrutable ends, of which we can now comprehend but a small part. When the mighty moral machinery of the world is completed, and our powers of mind are sufficient to understand it, *then* shall we perceive the harmony of God's attributes with the world's government, and acknowledge that all was designed by infinite wisdom, and controlled by boundless love. But at present we are left in no doubt of the real *origin* of the Mohamedan religion. When tried by its assumed adaptation to man's necessities and requirements, it is found wanting.

The *key* given to Mohamed was not the key of the kingdom of heaven, but the key of the bottomless pit: and the smoke that rose from that abyss on his opening it, was as the pestilential fumes of hell. The sun and the air were darkened. Such were truly the effects of his preaching. The great doctrine he inculcated was the *Unity of God*. But he provided no MEDIATOR between God and man. No *atonement* is required in the Koran for man as a sinner. And Jesus our Great High Priest and Mediator is degraded to the level of a prophet, of lower rank than Mohamed himself. The *Sun of righteousness* was thus darkened by his doctrines, and a thick smoke intervened between the mercy-seat and the sinner.

This is beginning to be felt even by Mohamedans themselves. One of the superior class of their Imans or priests, lately conversing with a British officer in India, declared he was first led to inquire into Christianity because he found no "Shufee"—advocate or mediator—in the Mohamedan creed. Another remarked, "I never could *love* a God such as the Koran proclaims: but I *can* love a God such as I learn to know in the Bible—a God who commands us to love our enemies, to bless those that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for those who persecute us."

But the mind of man was still further *darkened* by the *sensuality* which the Koran encourages in the practice of its followers here, and in the prospects it holds out to them hereafter. It shut out the

light arising from the contemplation of a *pure and holy* God ; and the glories of heaven it obscures, by representing the abode of angels and the purified spirits of the just, as a scene of pleasure, where every enjoyment is of the earth, earthy.

The vision goes on to represent *locusts* as coming out of the *smoke*—the meaning of which we cannot be at a loss to understand after the explanation given of the *key* of the abyss and the *smoke* which darkened the air.* The Arabs, the followers of Mohamed are doubtless prefigured by this emblem. They were thoroughly imbued with his doctrines, and propagated them with intrepid zeal. In the space of about eighty years they subdued Palestine, Syria, Armenia, almost all Asia Minor, Persia, India, Egypt, Numidia, all Barbary, Spain, and Portugal, and established Mohamedanism throughout those regions. The Arabs are compared to *locusts* or “grasshoppers for multitude,” in the book of Judges :—indeed the original word for Arab and locust is the same.

* After this Lecture was in type, it occurred to the author that the “*smoke*” in the vision might have reference to the corrupt and obscuring doctrines introduced into the Church, rather than to the rise of Mohamedanism. The *stars* fall from heaven (*one* as usual representing a class) when the “angels” or bishops of the Church forgot their high and heavenly calling, and taught doctrines unknown to Scripture, which could have emanated only from the bottomless pit. The doctrines especially concerning the nature of Christ, which distracted the minds of men in the sixth century, obscured their perceptions of divine truth, and darkened the Sun of righteousness. The zeal with which those heresies were propagated is most aptly symbolized in the vision by “smoke like as out of a furnace,”—hot, furious, suffocating. Such were the contentions between the Nestorians and the Eutychians. The former maintaining the doctrine of two distinct persons in Christ ; the latter asserting that Christ was never really man, but that His nature was one,—the word,—which was undivided and incarnate, bearing only whilst on earth a human shape. Their disputes in the Eastern Church, on the subject of the incarnation, are celebrated for their unyielding acrimony. The one party was characterised by the other as a band of robbers and assassins ; and in their turn were denounced as an impious as-

"It was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree." (ver. 4.)

This proves, if proof were necessary, that they were symbolical, not natural locusts. For, of the locusts sent as a plague upon Egypt, we read, "they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees, and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field." "The land," saith Joel (ii. 3), "is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness."

But the Arabs, the symbolical locusts, were *not* to hurt the grass or trees: this restriction in the prophecy has its counterpart in the Koran. It was the precept of Mohamed, and the order of the Caliph Abubeker to the Saracens on their first invasion of Syria, "Destroy no palm trees, nor any fields of corn, cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle." "In the siege of Tayef (says

semblage of demons, of spirits shut out from the mercy of heaven. From words they proceeded to blows;—tumult and disorder, murder and bloodshed, spread throughout Greece, Egypt, Abyssinia, Arabia, Palestine, Syria and other countries, dividing and disgracing the Church, and transforming the ministers of the Gospel into missionaries of the devil. In their religious frenzy thousands were slain, for the maintenance of doctrines which none could understand. Truly there was smoke from the bottomless pit. Bishops anathematized each other, and when assembled in Council their rancorous spirit broke through every restraint of religion and decency. Neither had they any respect for truth. Books were frequently forged to support their arguments. Synesius, Bishop of Ptolemais, openly advocated the practice of falsehood, and asserted that "truth is dangerous to the multitude, whose weak minds are not fitted for its reception."

Such was the condition of the Church when Mohamed assumed the title of a prophet, and began to proclaim the doctrine of *one God*. His locust-like Saracens then "came forth out of the smoke" of Christian heresy and fierce contention, and spread the faith of Islam with resistless rapidity over the regions of the East.—See Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," ch. xlvii., and Wright's "Early Christianity in Arabia," Sections 9 and 10.

Gibbon) sixty miles from Mecca, Mohamed violated *his own law* by the extirpation of the fruit trees." The law was dictated more by motives of policy, then of *mérey*; and the result was the rapid formation of flourishing kingdoms out of the countries conquered by the Saracens. In this respect their conduct presents a marked contrast to that of the Goths, Huns, and Vandals. The destruction of the trees and herbage was a striking feature in their invasions of the Roman empire; and the *deserts* that abounded in the conquered provinces long remained as a memorial of their ravages. But this had been pointed out in the Apocalyptic vision referring to *them*, as the direct reverse is foreshewn in the prediction concerning the Saracens.

It may be useful also to attend to the local propriety of the *symbols* by which the different nations are prefigured. It would have been a manifest incongruity if the Vandals had been represented as *horsemen*, when we know their attacks on the Roman empire were chiefly carried on by means of their ships; and it would have been equally inconsistent if the *locust* had been adopted as a symbol of the Goths, when we know they came from those cold regions of the north, where the locust is almost unknown.

"And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women; and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months." (ver. 7—10.)

There is here, as everywhere else in the sacred Scriptures, consistency and harmony between the sign and the thing signified. Nor would it have been possible for the wisest or the most ingenious of men to conceive and to execute a *pictorial representation* of the appearance, character and proceedings of the Arabs, at that period, with more unerring skill, and more strikingly accurate in

all its leading features, than the Spirit of God has here delineated them, so many ages before the events took place.

The *locust*, the groundwork of the symbol, belongs peculiarly to Arabia. It was the east-wind that brought the locusts on Egypt: from which we infer, that Arabia was the country from whence they issued; and "the inhabitants of Syria," says Volney and other travellers, "have remarked, that locusts come constantly from the deserts of Arabia." So also of the *scorpion*: the Jews assert that its native locality is the Arabian desert: and naturalists have always regarded Arabia as the original country of the *horse*; and its wildernesses as the haunts of the *lion*. So we find the *lion-like* courage of the numerous and rapid Arab *cavalry*, alike the terror and the astonishment of those whom they assailed.

But the symbolical locusts, besides having the shape of *horses*, tails like *scorpions*, and the teeth of a *lion*, had also *faces* as men, and *hair* as women. So several ancient writers—St. Jerome and others—describe the Arabs as having long flowing hair, with moustaches and the beard, "that venerable sign of manhood," as it has been called. But long hair among the Greeks and Romans was abhorred, as says also the Apostle Paul, "if a man have long hair, it is a shame to him." This peculiar feature of the Arab is specified also in the celebrated poem of *Antar*, which was composed about the time of Mohamed's birth, and in which the long hair flowing on the shoulders, the moustaches and beard, and the turban also, are mentioned. The turban is the *crown* in the symbol, for the Arabs have a usual saying among themselves, that "God had bestowed on them *turbans* which should be to them instead of *diadems*."

The symbolic locusts had also *breast-plates of iron*—and in the poem of *Antar* the steel cuirasses of the Arab warriors are frequently noticed. In the Koran, Mohamed says, "God hath given you coats of mail to defend you in your wars;" and in his second battle with the Koreish, 700 of Mohamed's little army wore defensive armour. So that the breast-plate of iron in the vision was literally applicable to the Saracens of the sixth and seventh century.

Thus prepared for the work of destruction, these terrible warriors

went forth on their mission :—and it is added, “ the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.” Indicating their numerous cavalry,—and the rapidity, the certainty and the extent of their conquests. In the year 629 they issued from the desert, proclaiming war against Christendom. In 636 Syria was subdued—soon afterwards the victorious Arabs entered Jerusalem, and the unhappy Patriarch exclaimed, “ The abomination of desolation is in the holy place.” The subjugation of Egypt quickly followed—in less than forty years afterwards the whole of the African Province ;—and in the beginning of the eighth century they conquered Spain ; for this woe was not confined, as the previous trumpet-visions, to the third part of the Roman world, but spread to the West as well as the East, through nearly the whole extent of the ancient empire ; and even beyond its limits, for Persia and India yielded to the victorious Saracens. At the end of the first century of the Hegira, their empire extended to two hundred days’ journey from East to West, and reached from the confines of Tartary and India to the shores of the Atlantic. “ Over all which ample space,” says Elliott, “ the venom of the *scorpion sting* of their conquerors was made to rankle in the breasts of the subject Christians.”

For they could not but feel perpetually the bitter contempt and hatred flowing out of the Moslem faith towards them. They were called Christian *dogs* and *infidels* ; deprived of the use of arms ; subjected to tribute, and obliged to rise up in the presence of the meanest Moslem. Such were some of the marks of their personal degradation. Their religion also was insulted, and their churches defiled. Their children were induced or compelled to apostatize, and the penalty of death attached to all who returned to the Christian faith ; these and a thousand other undefinable injuries or oppressions added to the bitterness of their lot as a conquered race, and tormented them as “ with the sting of a scorpion :” so that death was preferred to life, as it is said of the Jews taken captive to Babylon (Jer. viii. 3), “ Death shall be chosen rather than life, by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, in all the places whither I have driven them.”

The commission of the locusts was only against "those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." In speaking of the sealing of God's servants, we shewed that it especially indicated trust or faith in Him—in contradistinction to trust in saints or martyrs, or relics, or anything of man's device. It marked freedom from idolatry. Those who had not the seal were idolaters: and it was against idolaters that Mohammed declared in the Koran that God had commissioned him: and he urged his followers against the men of Roman Christendom as being of the number. That they rightly deserved the name, is evident from the testimony of history. In sketching the rise of Mohammedanism, Gibbon says, "The Christians of the seventh century had relapsed into a semblance of Paganism—their public and private vows were addressed to the relics and images that disgraced the temples of the East; and the throne of the Almighty was darkened by a cloud of martyrs, saints and angels, the objects of popular veneration." Such was their infatuation, that the Christians, when besieged by the Saracens, usually carried these images and relics in procession to the walls of the city, vainly trusting to their power for protection against the irresistible assaults of their enemies.

The men who had the seal of God suffered not. "The parts which remained the freest from the general infection of idolatry (says Bishop Newton) were Savoy, Piedmont, and the eastern parts of France, which were afterwards the nurseries and habitations of the Waldenses and Albigenses; and it is very memorable," he adds, "that when the Saracens approached these parts, they were defeated with great slaughter by the famous Charles Martel in several engagements." And when speaking of the Paulicians, those true servants of God in the East, Elliott says, "they took up a position of defence on Mount Argreus, near Casarea in Cappadocia; a position in which the neighbourhood of the Saracens proved to them to be an additional protection."

The symbolic locusts "had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon," which signifies

"the Destroyer." This Angel is generally explained as meaning Mohammed, and it is stated as a curious fact, that not only *during his lifetime* did the Moslems acknowledge Mohammed "as both their prophet and their king," but that even *after his death*, they who succeeded him as the commanders of the faithful, considered and called themselves Mohammed's Caliphs or Vicars—they were equally the head of their religion and their polity. Some, however, suppose Satan himself to be intended, of whom Mohammed was but the mouth or instrument. Whichever way interpreted, the prophecy was emphatically fulfilled. Wherever the Arab locusts went they carried with them the false religion of Mohammed,—the doctrines which had emanated from the bottomless pit,—they were governed by its laws, and actuated by its spirit. Unlike the Goths and other northern invaders, who, after conquering and settling in the Roman empire, embraced the religion of the conquered, and amalgamated with them as one people, the Saracens adhered to their own religion, and perpetuated their character as destroyers of the Christians.

But in the vision it is declared (ver. 5,) "that they should not *kill* them, but that they should be *tormented* five months;" and it is again repeated (ver. 10,) "their power was to *hurt* men *five* months." The locust is observed to live about five months, from April to September; and Bochart asserts, that scorpions are noxious for no longer a term, the cold rendering them torpid and inactive. Of the Arab locusts it is not said that their existence was only for five months, but their power of hurting or tormenting lasted so long.

This term of five months cannot be taken *literally*, as applicable to the power of the Saracens to *hurt*; but if we take each day for a year,—as the most learned and consistent commentators in all ages have done, in the interpretation of the Apocalypse, and which is sanctioned by other passages of Scripture,—we then have a period of one hundred and fifty years, during which the Saracens had power given them to *torment* the men of the Roman empire.

It is said, "they should not *kill* them." This is usually explained as signifying that the Greek or Eastern empire, against whom their

attacks were chiefly directed, should not be overthrown by them,—that political *life* or power should not be taken away. That was reserved for another people, prefigured under the second woe, who were commanded to “*kill* the third part of men.” But the Saracens killed few or none, except in battle; unlike the Goths and Huns, who ravaged, destroyed, and massacred without mercy. Though they did not put an end to the existence of the Roman empire, either in the east or west, yet the Arabs grievously “tormented” both divisions; and multitudes of “men” would “seek” or desire the political “death” of the corrupted and tyrannic government of the Eastern Emperors—that they might be freed from their grievous oppressions, and enjoy repose under the comparatively easy yoke of the Moslem Caliphs.

The Arabs indeed attempted the overthrow of the Greek empire, and twice besieged Constantinople, but were repulsed on each occasion with great loss; for they were then exceeding their commission. So also in the West, when they marched from Spain into France, their design was to conquer all Christendom, and to extinguish the kingdoms of the Franks and Lombards—but God suffered them not. They were to hurt Christendom both in the East and West, not utterly to destroy it: and as they had been repelled from Constantinople in the East; so they recoiled, broken and discomfited, from the blows of Charles Martel, the *hammer* of the West. This was in the year 732; when the 150 years assigned to the duration of their power were drawing to a close. Soon afterward, discord and divisions sprang up among them; the Saracens of Spain, in 756, set up another Caliph in opposition to the reigning house of Abbas. There was no longer *one king* over the locusts. And Sismondi, referring to this event, says, “The Colossus that had bestridden the whole south was now broken.”

But a farther and more serious diminution of their power to hurt, was effected by the removal of the seat of empire from Damascus to Bagdad; when, as Elliott observes, “the government and head of the locusts then took his flight, far eastward, away from Christendom.” The locusts now settled. “They no more roved,” says

Daubuz, "in a body as before in quest of new conquests." This event took place in the year 762, exactly 150 years from the time when Mohammed first opened the bottomless pit, by publicly preaching his imposture. The five months of the power of the locusts had expired,—or, on the principle of expounding a *day* as significant of a *year* in the periods of symbolic prophecy,—the hundred and fifty years of Arab aggressive warfare, as foreshewn in the vision had now been fulfilled. The very name that the Caliph Almanzor gave to his new capital, indicated the peaceable character that was thenceforth to attach to the Saracens. It was called Medinat al Salem—the *City of Peace*. And Gibbon, writing of this period, says, "War was no longer the passion of the Saracens,"—"the luxury of the Caliphs relaxed the nerves, and *terminated the progress* of the Arabian empire." Though they continued to exist as a powerful state, and were occasionally troublesome, they were no longer dreaded as a torment by the nations of Christendom. With the expiration of the hundred and fifty years, the intensity of the *first Woe* had passed away.

The propriety of applying the symbol of the locusts to the Arabs must be apparent to all who have paid attention to this subject; but there is yet another point of resemblance noticed by the learned commentator Daubuz. "There hath happened," he says, "in the extent of this torment, a coincidence of the event with the nature of the locusts. The Saracens have made inroads into all those parts of Christendom where the natural locusts are wont to be seen and known to do mischief, and no where else: and that too, in the same proportion. Where the locusts are seldom seen, there the Saracens stayed little: where the natural locusts are often seen, there the Saracens abode most; and where they breed most, there the Saracens had their beginning and greatest power."

But these *locusts* were specially directed (as has already been observed) against the men who had not the seal of God in their foreheads,—that is, the *Christian idolaters*;—and it is reasonable, and may be profitable, to inquire, whether the punishment inflicted upon them produced any reformation?—whether they were con-

vinced of the absurdity of trusting in saintly bones and relics, and turned from the worship of images to the living God?

History answers, that in the West, the visible Church remained unreformed, and the marks of the Apostasy grew broader and deeper. In the East, an attempt at reformation was made in the year 717, by the Emperor Leo, supported by a number of his subjects, who made war upon the images, and were thence called Iconoclasts. Their conduct was doubtless approved by the Almighty; for it was at this period that the Saracens, repulsed with shame and loss, were compelled to raise the siege of Constantinople. Leo's successor, Constantine Copronymus, was animated by the same spirit: he called a General Council in the year 754, wherein the *worship of images* was formally condemned;—and, as if the Lord had been waiting for this public act of repentance and solemn renunciation of idolatry, He so ordered it in His providence, that the very next year the Mohammedan empire was divided, and the power of the Saracens was broken. But the repentance of the Greek Church was not permanent; her goodness was as the early dew, and as the morning cloud:—she turned again to her idolatries; and in the year 787, another Council annulled the Act of the former, and solemnly decreed the worship of images to be lawful. Thus she remained, superstitious, idolatrous, unreformed. Under the next *Woe*, we shall find the Greek empire annihilated by the Turks, and the Greek Church crouching beneath the yoke of Mohammed.

Similar have been the dealings of God with his professing people in all ages. When the Israelites forsook him, they were oppressed by their enemies; and when they turned from their idols, he sent them deliverance. So has God dealt with our own land. When England declined from the simplicity of the Gospel, she was despised abroad and distracted at home. It was so in the days of Charles I., when outward ceremonies were exalted above heavenly realities. It was so in the days of his sons, when Popery was patronized and exalted—and Britain was brought very low. But God had still left many thousands of faithful worshippers; for their sake he

raised up deliverers, and crowned England with honour, and sent her forth prospering and to prosper.

We may therefore draw lessons from the past,—from the times of the Saracens, and from the history of our own land,—lessons both of warning and of encouragement. For thus saith the Lord, to nations and to individuals, “Them that *honour me*, I will honour, and they that *despise me*, shall be lightly esteemed.”—(1 Sam. ii. 30.)

“Yes, since God himself hath said it,
On his promise I rely;
His good word demands my credit,
What can unbelief reply?
He is strong and can fulfil,
He is truth and therefore will.”

LECTURE VII.

THE SECOND WOE.—THE DARK AGES.—HORNS OF THE GOLDEN ALTAR.
—LOOSING OF THE FOUR ANGELS.—THE TURKISH HORSEMEN.—
DURATION OF THEIR MISSION.—FALL OF THE GREEK EMPIRE.—ITS
EFFECTS ON WESTERN CHRISTENDOM.—REVELATION ix. 12—19.

“ONE woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.”—ix. 12.

In the passage before us, the expression *hereafter* has been generally understood as implying a considerable interval of time,—that the second woe did not succeed the first with the same rapidity of execution that marked the period which intervened between the second and third woe. Respecting the latter it is said, (xi. 14) “Behold, the third woe cometh *quickly*.” And such we shall find to have been the case in the historic fulfilment. Scarce sixty years intervened between the accomplishment of the second woe, on the complete overthrow of the Greek empire in 1460, and the beginning of those convulsions and calamities in Europe which mark the beginning of the third; while from the end of the first woe, when the Saracens removed their seat of empire from Damascus to Bagdad, and ceased to be an aggressive power, until the Turkman hordes burst across the Euphrates and desolated the Eastern empire, a period elapsed of almost three hundred years.

Such was the long-suffering of Jehovah towards his professing but apostate and idolatrous people. Not that they were left without tokens of God’s righteous indignation. More than once the Saracen locusts gave fearful proof of their vitality, and spread themselves over the whole of Asia Minor. Other nations also became as thorns in the sides of the Greeks: among them the Russians—a race at that time almost unknown to Christendom—who repeatedly invaded the empire with a fleet of canoes, and even

attempted the conquest of Constantinople in the eleventh century. (1043.) But all these were like summer clouds and soon passed away:—more continuous and more disastrous were the internal political convulsions and religious animosities, which disturbed the peace and weakened the energies of the empire until its final overthrow.

In the meantime the nations of the West had been compressed in the iron grasp of Charlemagne. The Franks, the Germans, the Saxons, the Huns and Lombards, acknowledged his sway. He was at the head of a powerful empire, and in the year 800 he was crowned by Pope Leo III. as "*The most pious Augustus, the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans.*"

But it was the image of the old Roman empire, without its vitality; it had an outward resemblance, but wanted the strength and unity which distinguished its predecessor. Therefore, when Charlemagne died, the bonds suddenly relaxed by which the nations of Europe were bound together, and his empire was divided. Independent sovereignties were established, whose chiefs acknowledged only a nominal headship in the emperor. Like the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image, "they did not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay."

But while the political bond of union was weak, there existed a strong religious tie, which bound the nations of the West to Saint Peter's chair. For after the empire had fallen beneath the sword of the Goth,* life yet lingered in the city of Rome itself; and her deadly wound was gradually healed under the fostering care of the Pope. His assumption of the title of Universal Bishop was recognised; his spiritual power was acknowledged; and kings and nobles, from every part of Europe, went on meritorious pilgrimages to Rome, enriching the shrine of St. Peter, and soliciting on bended knees the benediction of his successor. The Pope was venerated as something more than mortal, and the Church, of which he was the head, grew rich, and increased with goods.

* See Lecture V., p. 71.

In those dark ages superstition flourished throughout the Christian world; and many groundless opinions were fostered by the priests for their own advantage. But none was so profitable, or produced more excitement, than the belief, which was spread over all Europe towards the close of the tenth century, that the day of judgment was at hand. This belief was derived from the 20th chapter of the Revelation: for it was supposed St. John had explicitly foretold, that after a thousand years Satan would be let loose, and Antichrist appear; and as the vision proceeds immediately to describe the general judgment, it was concluded that the world would come to an end about the year 1000;—"and beyond all doubt this would take place," says a writer of that period, "when the annunciation of Mary should fall on a Saturday." Such were the rumours which filled the people with terror and alarm. "Hence," says Mosheim, "immense numbers transferring their property to the churches and monasteries, left all and proceeded to Palestine, where they supposed Christ would descend from heaven to judge the world. Others, by a solemn vow consecrating themselves and all they possessed to the Churches, the monasteries, and the priests, served them in the character of slaves, performing the daily tasks assigned them: for they hoped the Supreme Judge would be more favourable to them, if they made themselves servants to his servants. Hence also, whenever an eclipse of the sun or moon occurred, most people betook themselves to the caves and rocks." This general delusion was opposed, indeed, by a few wiser individuals; yet nothing could overcome it till the century had closed. "But when the century ended," adds Mosheim, "without any great calamity, the greater part began to understand that John had not really predicted what they so much feared."

In reading an account of this and similar extraordinary delusions, we cannot help concluding that they are consequences of departure from the living God—not liking to retain Him in their knowledge, and "receiving not the love of the truth that they might be saved, He sends them strong delusions that they should believe a lie." (2

Thess. ii. 11.) And respecting future events, it was expressly declared to Daniel, "None of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand."—(xii. 10.)

It was during these *dark ages*, as they have justly been called, when "monsters of iniquity" sat in St. Peter's chair, (See Baronius, in Mosheim, 333)—when ignorance and superstition degraded the Christian world—"when the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint"—that the trumpet of the sixth angel sounded, "And I heard," says St. John, "a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God."—(Rev. ix. 13.)

We have had occasion already to refer to the Jewish temple-service, as being patterns only of things in the heavens. And St. Paul tells us (Heb. ix. 21—23) that as it was necessary that these patterns of heavenly things should be purified with blood, even so the heavenly things themselves were purified with better sacrifices—even with the blood of the Great High Priest himself:—teaching us that there is no access to heaven—no forgiveness of sin—no hope of mercy—but through the blood of atonement, which was prefigured from the beginning of the world.

And the blood of atonement has an especial connection with the four "horns of the golden altar." We read in Exodus xxx. of the altar of incense, the golden altar: "Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin-offering of atonement: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the Lord." So also (Lev. xvi. 18), when the high priest made an atonement for himself and for his house, he put the blood "upon the horns of the altar round about." And again, when an individual or the whole congregation of Israel sinned through ignorance (Lev. iv.), an atonement was made in the same manner.

So, in the great reformation under king Hezekiah, after the cleansing of the temple, "they brought a sin-offering for the kingdom, and for the sanctuary, and for Judah," and "made reconciliation with the blood upon the altar," in the appointed manner. The efficacy of the atonement was soon manifested. Israel was at

peace with God; and when Sennacherib made war upon them, the Lord miraculously saved them from his hand.

The atonement thus made upon the horns of the altar of incense, was typical of the powerful efficacy—of the peace-speaking blood of Jesus—and therefore when we hear a voice of judgment instead of mercy issuing from the horns of the altar, we may consider it as indicating sin and guilt in connection with that locality; that the atonement and the altar had been made a scene of profanation. There are several passages wherein the locality of the sin is indicated by a voice crying from it. Thus we read in the prophecies of Isaiah (lxvi.) “A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the Lord that rendereth recompense to his enemies,” because they had profaned the temple and the altar, by “sacrificing a lamb as if they cut off a dog’s neck, by offering oblations as if they offered swine’s blood, by burning incense as if they blessed an idol.” And we find, on reference to history, that it was in a similar manner the worship and service of the Lord was profaned and corrupted throughout Christendom. Incense was burnt in the churches; but it was in honour of the Virgin Mary, the saints, and martyrs; and prayers were made at *their* shrines more frequently than at the throne of mercy. The Christian world had forsaken the High Priest, in respect of his connection with the altar, both as their Atoner for sin, and as their Intercessor, Mediator, and Offerer of the incense of their prayers before God; and they were taught to consider the very symbol of his atoning blood as an unspeakable and awful mystery, upon which human eyes were scarcely permitted to look; instead of viewing it as that simple, that consolatory, yet solemn sign, appointed by the Redeemer himself, whereby his humble followers should shew forth his death until he come again.

Notwithstanding the rebuke of their apostasy by the Saracenic invasion and the respite which followed, the Eastern Church, in an especial manner, persisted in its idolatrous superstitions. And we find, in the tenth century, under the emperor John Zimisce, that a statue of the Virgin Mary, of great sanctity, was carried in tri-

umphal procession to Constantinople, and there deposited in the principal Church, as the Palladium of the empire; and even during the final siege of the city in 1453, the infatuated Greeks had it solemnly exhibited, in the vain hope of obtaining help and safety. "Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord."

Their cries for help to their helpless idols, were answered by a voice from the horns of the profaned and neglected altar—"Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed; by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt."—(ver. 14—19.)

Some commentators understand the angels here mentioned to be heavenly spirits, and that these four are the angels who are represented in the seventh chapter, as holding the four winds of the earth. But this opinion is too fanciful to obtain much consideration. *They* were employed to restrain judgment until God's servants had obtained security, and were not themselves bound or restrained to any locality. The more generally adopted explanation is, that the angels signify the leaders, or chiefs of those Scythian, Tartar, or Mongol tribes who dwelt beyond the limits of the Roman empire; its well-known eastern boundary being the river Euphrates. The first of these leaders was Alp Arslan (or "the valiant lion," "who passed the Euphrates," says Gibbon, "in the year 1063, at the head of the Turkish cavalry, and the loss of the kingdom and frontier of Armenia was the news of a day." The Greek emperor

hastened to meet him, with a large army, but was defeated and taken prisoner. The second great leader from beyond the Euphrates, was the celebrated Genghis Khan or "king of kings," who, in 1183, at the head of above 500,000 men, chiefly cavalry, involved both Saracens and Christians in one common overthrow. The next who invaded Asia Minor was Ortogrul, who led a tribe of Turks or Scythians from Persia where they had first settled. He died in 1289, and his son Othman became the founder of the present Turkish empire. The fourth angel of destruction was Timour or Tamerlane the Tartar. After overrunning the whole of India, he invaded Western Asia in 1398, at the head of 800,000 troops, of whom the greater part were horsemen. His chief object was the overthrow of the Sultan Bajazet, whom he defeated and took prisoner in a battle in which 400,000 men lost their lives. But the Christians suffered as well as the Saracens; for esteeming it his duty to propagate Mohammedanism by the sword, he inflicted numberless evils on the faithful Christians, cruelly butchering some, and dooming others to perpetual slavery; he even, it is said, extirpated Christianity in many cities and provinces, while vast multitudes abandoned their religion from terror, at the command of the conqueror. And he also compelled the Greek emperor to pay him tribute. By these successive invasions, the limits of the Roman empire in the East were gradually reduced, and the way prepared for its total overthrow; which indeed would have taken place long before, had it not been for the Crusades of the eleventh and twelfth centuries,—those singular results of the combination of enthusiasm and superstition,—when the chivalry of Europe attempted the recovery of the Holy Land, and stayed the progress of Mohammedanism on the plains of Palestine.

But it has been objected to this explanation of the four angels, as successive leaders of distinct Tartar hordes—that their loosing in the text is described as a single act, and that the agencies symbolized must have been at one and the same time commissioned.

To this I may reply, that the text does not necessarily imply a single act, and that it may be equally understood of successive

agencies as of one, after the loosing or removal of the impediment, that is, after the passage of the Euphrates had once been effected. Besides, other texts of Scripture afford examples to justify this explanation—especially that in Daniel vii. 3, where he sees in vision “four great beasts come up from the sea, divers one from another;”—notwithstanding the apparent oneness of this act, we know, both from the context and from history, that the vision refers to the rise of distinct and successive monarchies, which never had a contemporaneous existence.

But besides this, there is the insuperable difficulty of not finding in history any four angels or human agencies, acting simultaneously against the third part of men in the Eastern empire, from the boundary of the Euphrates. Bishop Newton explains them as the four Sultanies founded by the Turks in the eleventh century. But three of these were on this side of the Euphrates, and therefore could not be bound by it. Again he refers to Ortoğrul and his three sons as the four angels; but of two of the sons we know little or nothing beside their names.

The explanation of the four *successive* hordes of Tartars who weakened and finally destroyed the remaining third of the Roman empire, agrees also with the phrase employed to denote the vast number of their horsemen. It is said to be two hundred thousand thousand, or more correctly, myriads of myriads—an indefinite phrase, not unfrequently used in Scripture, as in the blessing of Rebekah, “Be thou the mother of thousands of myriads.” Now it is well known that the Tartar armies are almost entirely composed of horsemen. And Gibbon speaks of “the myriads of the Turkish horse overspreading the Greek frontier from the Taurus to Erzeroum, and of the cavalry of the earlier Turks being proudly computed by millions.” I have already referred to these numbers when speaking of their four great leaders. John says, “I heard the number of them.” This we may understand as spoken in his representative character of the Christian Church; shewing the peculiar impressiveness with which the report of the vast numbers and power of the Turks fell upon the ear of Christendom, both in

the West and in the East—filling the Greeks with terror, and impelling the Latins to undertake the Crusades.

“The horses and them that sat on them had breastplates of fire, jacinth and brimstone”—or red, blue and yellow, denoting the colours of the uniform worn by the Turkish cavalry (until the late innovations). The lion-like heads of the horses signify the courage with which they were endowed; and the titles affected by the chiefs, such as Alp Arslan, the “valiant lion;” Kizil Arslan, the “red lion,” &c.; and “the Turks,” says Rycaut, “compare the Grand Seignior to the lion, and other kings to little dogs.”

“Out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed.” In consequence of the Turks having used enormous cannon in the capture of Constantinople, it has been usual to consider the fire, smoke and brimstone of the vision, as typical of the effects of the artillery then employed, and there is great plausibility in the interpretation:—but it is open to serious objections: in the first place, the Turks had little acquaintance with cannon, before their last attack on the Greek capital; and secondly, the large cannon used on that memorable occasion, were cast, not by Turks, but by a deserter from the Greeks. We must also remember that “smoke,” in the preceding vision of the first woe, was shewn to denote false doctrine,—and consistency requires that the same meaning should attach to the symbol when used in the passage before us. The fire and brimstone are always used in Scripture to signify the severe judgments of the Almighty; as in Deut. xxix. 23, it is predicted, that the land of Israel should become “brimstone and burning,” if the people forsook the law of God; in the Psalms it is said, “on the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone:” and Ezekiel (xxxviii. 22), threatens Gog and all his bands, with “hailstones, fire and brimstone.” These significant symbols of overwhelming judgment and destruction have doubtless the same meaning in the passage before us, and we have already shewn that they were exactly fulfilled in the experience of eastern Christendom.

All the four angels, or leaders of the Tartar tribes, were of

Mohammedan faith, and diffused the smoke, the false doctrine of Mohammed, wherever they penetrated; and this they did with violence, unlike their Saracen predecessors, who seldom destroyed except in the field of battle. The Turks persecuted the Christians in the most cruel manner, putting many to death, mutilating some, and plundering others of all their property:—their children were circumcised by compulsion—their cities frequently burnt; and the land laid desolate. It was thus “the third part of men were killed.” By “their mouths,” the horsemen disseminated their false doctrine—with “their tails having heads,” doing hurt. This last expression has been ingeniously shewn to have reference to the Turkish commanders, or Pashas, whose ensign of power is literally a horse’s tail; the having one, two, or three horse-tails, marking the difference of rank among them. Just as on the opening of the first three seals—the badge of a bow, a sword, or a balance, prefigured the character of the rider on the horse. These Pashas injure and oppress the Christians of the Turkish empire, as is well known to all acquainted with their history, “like ravening harpies, (says Knolles) his Bassaes, as it were, suck out the blood of his poor subjects.”

In the vision a limit is assigned to the period during which the angels were to execute their mission. “An hour, a day, a month, and a year,”—which, reckoning a prophetic day as signifying a year, amount to 391 years and 15 days. Various dates have been given as the commencement and termination of this period. Bishop Newton assigns the year 1281, when the Othmans gained their first conquest over the Christians, as the beginning of the time mentioned in the vision; and their last conquest, the taking of Cameniec from the Poles in 1672, as its termination. But it is evident from history that the Turks were loosed from the Euphrates long before the year 1281. So early as 1063, Alp Arslan, as already mentioned, passed the Euphrates at the head of the Turkish cavalry; and from this first invasion of the Greek empire until the taking of Constantinople, a period of 390 years intervened. Again, the Turks, after their first passage of the Euphrates, having

been driven back in 1071, by the victory of Malazgerd, succeeded in permanently establishing themselves in Asia Minor; and in 1461, they destroyed the last remnants of the Greek empire in the Morea and at Trebizond. These latter dates mark the same interval as the foregoing; and, though closely approximating to the predicted number of years, are not satisfactory.—The language employed in the vision requires a more exact fulfilment.

Mr. Elliott,* with great learning and ingenuity, has shewn that the "year" in the passage should be calculated according to the Julian year of 365 days 6 hours, and that the exact length of the whole period amounts to 396 years 106 days. He then fixes the date of the "loosing of the angels" to the 18th January, 1057—when Thogrul Beg (who had been proclaimed, "Protector and Governor of the Moslem Empire") went forth from Bagdad with his Turkmans, as head of the power of Islamism, "to enter on a long career of war and conquest." From that day to the fall of Constantinople, on the 29th May, 1453, is 396 years and 130 days. "Such," says Elliott, "is the exact *historical* interval. And now, turning to the *prophetic* interval—of 396 years 106 days—it is obvious that in respect of years it coincides precisely with that of history; also that by its days additional, it reaches just into the midst of the siege with which the latter closes. In effect, the prophetic period expired just at the epoch in the siege, when Sultan Mahomet, by transporting his ships across the isthmus of Galata, secured the success which momentarily before begun to be despaired of by the Turkmans. It marked the critical turning point of success to the Turkmans, of destruction to the Greeks."

According to this mode of calculation it was exactly an hour, a day, a month, and a year, after the Turks went forth on their mission, that the third part of men were slain,—or the remaining third of the Roman empire deprived of every vestige of political power. The church was subjugated as well as the state, and from 1460 to the year 1821 the Patriarch received his investiture from the Turkish Sultan.

* *Hornæ Apocalypticæ*, i. 342, first edition.

The Greek church is henceforward left in the Apocalypse without further notice, and it has continued ever since as *dead*. If we were inclined to interpret the slaying of the third part of men *literally*—the immense numbers who perished in the successive invasions of the Tartars, and in the destruction of the Eastern empire, would seem to justify the explanation;—especially if we add to these the multitudes who fell during the Crusades, when “the lives and labours of millions,” says Gibbon, “were buried in the East.”

The fall of Constantinople on the 29th of May 1453, filled the rest of Christendom with grief and consternation; and attempts were made to unite the different European powers in a crusade against the Turks. But every state had a separate prince, and every prince a separate interest.—“The Pope and the Emperor,” says Æneas Sylvius, “were unable to command, and none were willing to obey.” The Turks for above two centuries longer continued to threaten and disturb the kingdoms of Europe.

But it is said by many, that the appointed hour for their destruction is now about to strike; it is the belief of the Mussulmans themselves; and some, who imagine that empires, like the moon, wax and wane, by computing the time between its rise and its arrival at maturity, have fixed the date of the overthrow of the Turkish empire in the present year 1853. Whether this be correct or not, time will soon shew; but the present condition of that state, her adoption of many European habits and principles, and the events which crowd around her, all portend speedy and marvellous revolutions. The walls of Mohamedanism are crumbling into dust—the Euphrates is drying up.* A few days ago† it was observed by a continental Journal, “Should the claims of Russia on the Sultan be arranged peaceably, the Turkish empire will fall in *peace*—if the reverse, it will fall in *war*. If the Emperor of Russia acquires the right to appoint the Patriarch at Constantinople, and

* See Lecture XVIII. on the Sixth Vial, for an explanation of what the author believes to be the true meaning of this phrase.

† This Lecture was delivered on the 27th April, 1853.

with it the protectorate over the Greek Christians in Turkey (14 or 15 millions) the empire which ended exactly 400 years ago will be restored *de facto* in 1853." Such a result is possible. But politicians have made such serious miscalculations during the last few years, that we may safely regard the fall of the Turkish empire at present as very problematical.

But the Apocalyptic vision calls our attention to the effects produced by the second Woe on the rest of Christendom. "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk : neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts." (ver. 20, 21.) Their terror at the overthrow of the Greek empire produced no repentance, no humiliation, no abandonment of those sins which had provoked the righteous indignation of the Lord. They had escaped punishment and they continued in their transgressions. The worship of devils and idols is here prominently set forth as their great sin. Devils in this passage, as in many others, should be rendered demons, or spirits of departed men, whether good or bad :—and it is well-known that the worship of saints and martyrs, and of the Virgin Mary, soon crept into the church of God, and until the era of the Reformation became the almost universal religion of Christendom. Not content with invoking the names of the apostles and saints, pictures were introduced to assist the devotion of the worshipper, and afterwards images ; idols of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and wood, to render still more palpable to the senses the senseless objects of adoration. In their madness also, the idolaters formed pictures of the Trinity, and worshipped the crucifix instead of the once crucified but now glorified Redeemer. But the Church of Rome repels the charge of idolatry, and attempts to distinguish between the honour due to God, and that which they pay to the demons. Of whom, however, can the Spirit of Prophecy be here speaking, if not of the Church of Rome? And she denies not her saint-worship

and her images. Moreover, the distinction which she makes in words, between an inferior worship which may be paid to the work of men's hands, and the superior worship which ought to be paid to God alone, is entirely forgotten in practice. The prayers offered to the saints and images are as fervent, and more frequent than those addressed to Jehovah—and the trust reposed in them not less firm. The crowds of blinded devotees, so frequently attracted by the reputed sanctity of a favourite saint, or the miraculous virtue of some holy relic, afford incontestable proof that the creature is worshipped rather than the Creator—and that the Church recognises and sanctions the idolatry, nay, even increases it by placing in the Calendar the names of those whom she deems worthy of worship—thus adding to the number of her demons.

However specious the pretence that visible representations incite to piety and raise the thoughts to heaven, the practical effects of kneeling before a crucifix or any image, are like those produced by the painted windows of a Cathedral,—the light from heaven is obscured; the eye cannot reach to the sunshine beyond, and rests in admiration on the pictorial medium. It is thus gloom gathers on the soul, and faith grows weak when fixed on material objects. It loses the faculty of rendering substantial the things hoped for, and of realizing as evident the things not seen. Our merciful and gracious Lord knew this, and therefore he said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or the likeness of any thing, to bow down to them or serve them." He is a spirit and requires to be worshipped in spirit and in truth—not through a false medium, or in a way He never appointed.

But the rest of the men are also charged with "murders, sorceries, fornications, and thefts." To establish the charge of murder we need only refer to the persecution of the Waldenses. In the year 1179, war was declared against them, as heretics, and never was the merciless spirit of murder more awfully exhibited. This was continued even after the destruction of the Greek empire: until not only they, but the followers of Huss in Bohemia and other faith-

ful souls were believed to be exterminated. The "sorceries of the men," like the murders they committed, were intimately connected with and sprang from their idolatry—these were the lying miracles and visions wherewith the priests of Rome deceived the people and supported the credit of their idols. The morals also of the clergy were as debased as their superstitions were degrading—universal licentiousness prevailed, as is admitted and denounced even by their own historians. The enforced *celibacy* of the priests, and of the multitudes of monks and nuns, during the period referred to, involved the depravation of the outward morals and of the heart—not only among themselves but in the world around them.

They are also accused of *theft*—and the fraudulent value set upon relics—the demand and supply of which was incessant during the dark ages—may well be termed *theft*; so also may we consider the sale of indulgences, and, above all, the means by which they obtained testamentary bequests to the church and to monasteries.

These are the characteristics of the Church of Rome to the present day, though they do not stand out in such bold relief as in the fifteenth century. Since the era of the Reformation, an outward reformation has been effected in Rome itself—she has accommodated herself more to the spirit of the times—knowing that the eye of Protestantism is upon her. But there has been no repentance: her idols have been multiplied, not abandoned—the blood of the saints still cries against her. And she remains the *mystery of iniquity*, the standing monument of God's forbearance, until heaven and earth shall be called upon to rejoice over her destruction.

We sit not in judgment upon her, but merely repeat what Prophecy has plainly revealed. It is our *privilege* to be born in a purer atmosphere; it is our *duty* to walk as the children of light—with a single eye to God's glory, lest our light also be turned into great darkness. In the next Lecture, with God's help, we shall be called on to contemplate the darkness that abounded in Christendom

* See the Pope's Decree of December 8, 1854, establishing the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary.

just before the Reformation, and the glorious light that then shone forth—and is now burning brighter than ever.

“Send out thy light and truth, O God,
With sound of trumpet from above,
Break not the nations with thy rod,
But draw them as with cords of love :
Justice and mercy meet,
The work is well-begun ;
Through every clime their feet,
Who bring salvation, run ;
In earth as heaven, thy will be done.”

LECTURE VIII.

STATE OF CHRISTENDOM.—THE BOHEMIAN BRETHREN.—THE ANGEL CLOTHED WITH A CLOUD.—THE LITTLE BOOK.—HILDEBRAND AND THE BOHEMIANS.—WICKLIFF.—JOHN HUSS.—INVENTION OF PRINTING.—TRANSLATIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES.—LUTHER AND THE REFORMATION.—ITS EFFECTS IN GERMANY AND ENGLAND.—THE SEVEN THUNDERS.—THE OATH OF THE ANGEL.—THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL.—REVELATION X.

IN our progress through the Apocalypse, we are now brought nearly to the era of the Reformation. The culminating point of the Second Woe, the taking of Constantinople in 1453, occurred only sixty-four years before the beginning of the Reformation under Luther. The 10th, and part of the 11th chapter of the Revelation, contain, as in an episode, the history of the Church, described in visions and symbols. This history appears to be unconnected with the Trumpet visions, and is placed between the 6th and 7th, the main incidents having occurred soon after the sounding of the one, and were quickly followed by the sounding of the other.

The state of Christendom, at the close of the fifteenth century, was truly deplorable; the Lollards in England had been nearly exterminated; the Waldenses had been silenced; and in Bohemia the followers of Huss had been reduced to a small remnant of Brethren. In the year 1489, this remnant sent deputies into various parts of the Christian world, to ascertain if there were any besides themselves who testified for Jesus. They found none. The Brethren could only implore God's mercy on fallen Christendom; and, in the hope of some gracious interference in its favour, they passed the resolution that same year in a Synod, "that if anywhere God should raise up faithful teachers and reformers of the Church,

they would make common cause with them." Soon afterward, the Brethren were again exposed to severe persecution, and all but silenced.

The whole Christian world supinely acquiesced in the enormous absurdities of Popery ;—ignorance and superstition surrounded and covered the nations of Europe ; they groped about as if in a gloomy dungeon, chained to St. Peter's chair ; and could only crawl from the shrine of one saint to another—afraid to look higher than the degrading objects of their abject idolatry. Still we know there were a few,—we may believe there were many,—who lifted up their hearts to heaven ; and on them, through the chinks in the walls of their prison house, streamed the light of life from the Sun of Righteousness. God never left himself without witness. And his faithful witnesses might rely upon the promise, that the gates of hell should not prevail against them. But their faith and patience were now sorely tried ; and Jesus who had given the promise, heard their sighing, and arose for their deliverance.

This is distinctly symbolized in the glorious vision with which the 10th chapter opens : "I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud : and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire : and he had in his hand a little book open : and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth." (ver. 1—3.)

This was none other than the "Angel of the Covenant," who appeared to John in the commencement of the vision, and describes himself as Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow ; and his eyes were as a flame of fire ; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace ; and his voice as the sound of many waters." He was the same whose face on the mount of transfiguration, "did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." He was the great Head of the Church, for he says in the next chapter, "I will give power unto my two witnesses." And no created angel is ever represented in Scripture as "clothed with a cloud."

But the cloud may have reference to the indistinctness with which men recognized the footsteps of the Lord, in the events to which the vision refers, and their unwillingness to acknowledge that the work was His. "It is only a quarrel among the monks," said the Pope, when Luther began the Reformation.

In the hand of the angel was a little book open. The little book has been explained by some, as signifying a codicil or second prophecy added to the larger one which was sealed with seven seals: but if so, the little book contained more than the larger one. I believe it signifies the Bible, the Book of God. Some would confine it to the Gospels; because a copy of that portion of the New Testament, was put into Luther's hands when he was ordained as a preacher, as was customary at that time. But there is no need to restrict the meaning of the little book to any portion of the Bible. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. All Scripture is profitable for men.

But the Bible is, indeed, a little book, when contrasted with the voluminous writings of the Fathers—which formed the great body of scholastic divinity previous to the Reformation, and for which the study of the Bible was neglected and contemned. The Bible also became a little book in itself, by the wonderful invention of Printing, and the introduction of Paper, as compared with the cumbrous parchment rolls on which it had previously been written.

It was open in the Angel's hand. The Bible contains the revelation of the will of God to man, and was ever intended by Him to be open to all; that all should hear it,—all should read it,—that all should meditate upon it, and understand it, each man for himself. Hence we read in Deut. vi. 6, 7, "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Moses thought, says Bishop Patrick, "the things of his law to be so very plain and easy, that every father might instruct his sons, and every mother her daughters: and surely the Gospel of our Lord

Jesus Christ is as easy as the law of Moses." Our Saviour exhorted his hearers to search the Scriptures, and appeals to them in proof of the doctrines which he taught. So also his Apostles command that their Epistles be read openly in the Churches, and they always suppose a knowledge of the Old Testament to be possessed by those to whom they wrote. St. John even intended the Apocalypse to be an open book: he calls it "the *Revelation* of Jesus Christ, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass," and he adds, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy." The ancient Fathers concur in the same opinion, that the Bible should be read and studied by all men. St. Jerome justly styles it "A Book for the people; not for this or that man only, but for the whole people." Hence the multiplicity of translations of the Scriptures, as Christianity spread in the world. Chrysostom and Theodoret tell us, that in their days, the Bible was translated into the Syrian, Median, Persian, Armenian, Ethiopian, Scythian and Samaritan. The Syrian version is supposed to have been made by the Christians at Antioch, in the latter part of the first century.

But this zeal of the Church for the translation and diffusion of the Scriptures soon waxed cold. When heresy and superstition crept in, the Bible was neglected and grew dusty.

Instead of "the Word of God" sufficing the believer and the preacher, as St. Hilary assures us was the case in his days,—the traditions of men were listened to with eagerness, and soon became texts for the declamations from the pulpit. In the Middle Ages these evils increased, and men at length imagined that the worship of God consisted in the performance of ceremonies, and that none but "learned theologians" could understand the Scriptures: Not considering that the use of learning is to make the Scriptures plain to the unlearned, as Ezra explained them to the Jews on the return from Babylon. Hence we need not be surprised at the assumption of the Church of Rome—that the Public Services should be conducted in Latin, which the people, and even many of the priests did not understand. The Scriptures also were forbidden to

be read, except in Latin; and they were thus virtually sealed up. The Bible was no longer an open book; and the "people perished for lack of knowledge."

No doubt the priests felt then as the priests of Rome feel now—that many of their doctrines and practices were condemned by the Word of God, and therefore they resisted every attempt to render it intelligible to the laity. Thus, when the Duke of Bohemia, in 1079, requested that Divine Service might be performed in the Slavonic tongue, Pope Gregory VII., better known as Hildebrand—(the most vigorous and ambitious of the Roman Pontiffs), replied, "We cannot favour this petition. For it is manifest to us, who have often revolved this in our mind, that it has rightly pleased Almighty God that the Holy Scriptures should be obscure in some passages, lest if they should be open to all, they should chance to be despised and exposed to contempt. For it avails not as an excuse, that some have tolerated what the people sought in their simplicity—since the primitive Church took no notice of many things, which were afterwards corrected by the sacred Fathers, when Christianity had been established, and religion had increased: Wherefore, by the authority of the blessed Peter, we forbid that to be done which is imprudently petitioned for by your subjects, and we instruct you to resist with all your power this vain temerity, to the honour of Almighty God."*

Thus was the desire of the Bohemians to hear and read the Scriptures in their own tongue, rejected by one who pretended to be the successor of him who said, in his first Epistle, "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." It was the same throughout the whole of Christendom:—the light of truth was extinguished, and a long night of darkness set in.

But this was not to last for ever. In the fourteenth century Wickliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, appeared in England; and, besides vigorously opposing the errors of Popery, he trans-

* Finch's Selection of the Letters of Hildebrand, page 103.

lated the Bible into his native language. This he accomplished in defiance of the monks, who said it was heresy to speak of the Holy Scriptures in the vernacular tongue. And from his diligence in expounding them, he was called the "Evangelical Teacher." After him rose John Huss in Bohemia, who, in 1415, suffered martyrdom for the sake of the Gospel, which he had for twenty years faithfully proclaimed—ever maintaining the Word of God to be "the only rule of faith and life of a Christian." His spiritual seed, purified by persecution, were not destroyed—they survive to this day;* and, like Huss, acknowledge the Bible to be their only creed.

The noble art of Printing had been discovered in 1440; and was soon made available for the diffusion of the Scriptures. Within ten years an edition was printed in Latin,—and several others followed. But to the Bohemian Brethren belong the honour of "being the first of any people in Europe who printed the Bible in the language of their own country." This was done at Venice in the year 1470. "This precious book," it is stated † "which hitherto had been almost entirely unknown to the common people, met with so rapid a sale, that they published a second and third edition of it at Nuremberg, and at length established three printing offices in Bohemia and Moravia, which, at first, were wholly employed in printing Bohemian Bibles." This, let us remember, was before the Reformation. The *open book* was seen in the Angel's hand before Luther was commissioned to preach.

And here I cannot help noticing, what I have already more than once pointed out—the remarkable chronological order in which the visions are arranged—the one previous to this we are considering prefigured the overthrow of the Greek empire, which took place in 1453. In less than twenty years from that event, the Bible, which had for centuries been buried in the cells of the monks, was made patent to the world. No less striking in their adaptation are the

* In the Church of the United Brethren, or Moravians.

† In the "Select Narratives," extracted from the History of the Brethren's Church.

symbols by which the things that are to come to pass have been prefigured; and if we reject the facts that are now brought forward as evidence of their fulfilment, we may search history in vain for the meaning of the visions. But this is only another proof of the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures—for none but He who seeth the end from the beginning, could have adapted and arranged the symbols of the Apocalypse to the future history of the Church and the world.

Soon after Luther commenced the work of the Reformation, he began the translation of the Scriptures from the Hebrew and Greek originals. Some fragments from the Vulgate had indeed been printed in German as early as 1477, and again in 1483 and 1490: but the translation was very defective, the printing bad, and the price so high as to place them beyond the reach of the common people. In 1522 the printing of Luther's New Testament was begun and carried on with an activity beyond all example. "One might have thought," says D'Aubigné, "the very printers felt the importance of the work in hand. Three presses were continually employed, and 10,000 sheets were struck off every day." It was finished on the 21st of September, and from that hour every German might obtain the Word of God for about half-a-crown. It was a national work—it became the book of the people. They caught the sheets from the press, as a letter coming to them from heaven; 3000 copies were quickly sold,—and another edition appeared in December following. Within ten years no less than fifty-eight editions issued from the presses of Germany. The great work of the Reformation was thus placed on a rock whence nothing could dislodge it. The Bible was now *open* in the hand of a mighty angel, never more to be closed.

The New Testament was published in English in 1526, but the printing of the whole Bible was not completed till 1539. Various editions quickly followed. Among other means adopted by our Reformers to diffuse a knowledge of the Scriptures, was that of chaining copies to suitable places in the principal churches, where all who were able might read the Word of life to the listening

crowds around them. The contents of the Bible were thus made known throughout the length and breadth of the land.

And what were the results? The same effects were produced in Bohemia, Germany, England, and other places, as in the land of Israel; it enlightened the eyes and purified the hearts of those who loved the truth. Such readers of the open Scriptures recognized the voice of Jesus, and could say one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way? "When Christians began to read the Bible in their families, Christianity itself underwent a palpable change. Thence ensued changed habits, improved morals, other conversations—in short, a new life."

This seems indicated by the face of the angel resembling the sun—enlightening and elevating not only individual minds but whole communities. And the improvement which took place in the morals of the nations which embraced the Gospel at the Reformation, appears also to be pointed out to us, in "his feet as pillars of fire." The Bible teaching us that believers should tread in the footsteps of their Master—and walk in light, because, like Enoch, they "walk with God."

"The right foot of the angel was set upon the sea, and his left upon the earth." The *sea*, signifying in other passages the sea-coast, or islands in the sea, has, by several commentators, been explained in this passage, as signifying *England*, and the *earth* as signifying *Germany*,—on which two countries the glorious light of the Reformation did especially shine—and in which the footsteps of Jesus were most distinctly visible and abiding. The Lord says, by the prophet Isaiah, "I will make the place of my feet glorious."

The Protestant States of Germany were unquestionably elevated and ennobled by the power and liberty which the Gospel ever bestows on those who embrace it. But has not England, the place on which the *right foot* of the Angel rested, been made glorious! Compare her condition now, with what it was previous to the Reformation: and the contrast must fill every reflecting mind with wonder—exhibiting such an increase of power, of skill, of wealth, and of fame, as is unparalleled in the world's history. The extent

of the British dominions is three times greater than was that of the Roman empire in the height of its grandeur, and the people are more numerous in proportion. England is now the admiration and the envy of the world—while her civilizing influence is felt to earth's remotest bound. And to what dare we attribute her power and prosperity?—To nothing but to the foot of the mighty Angel like a pillar of fire planted on her shore—to the light of his countenance, cheering, strengthening and expanding her heart—to the open Book in his hand, "instructing her in righteousness, making her perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work."

But further we read, "The angel cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth." This intimates to us, not only the boldness and intrepidity of the noble band of Reformers, whom the Head of the Church raised up to proclaim the Gospel in the sixteenth century, but also the startling nature of their discourses and writings.

The first act of Luther as a Reformer—the nailing of his famous 95 Theses against the church door of Wittenberg—is a striking comment on this passage. The boldness with which he attacked the doctrine of Indulgences in his Theses, and maintained the doctrine of Justification by Faith, startled and roused the whole of Christendom. "Hardly had they been nailed to the church door," says D'Aubigné, "when the feeble sound of the hammer was succeeded by a thunder-clap which shook the very foundations of proud Rome; threatened with instant ruin the walls, gates, and pillars of the Papacy; stunned and terrified its champions; and at the same time awakened from the slumber of error many thousands of men!" These Theses spread with the rapidity of lightning. "In the space of a fortnight, they had spread over Germany; and within a month, they had run through all Christendom: as if angels themselves had been the bearers of them to all men. It is difficult to conceive the stir they occasioned." Such was the first lion-like cry of the angel. Divine power accompanied Luther's bold attacks on the Papacy, and sustained him during the conflict. The same power and boldness marked his discourses from the pulpit. His clear and sonorous voice arrested the attention of his

audience; and his knowledge of the Gospel gave to his eloquence an authority, energy, and unction, which none of his predecessors had possessed. "Speaking his mother tongue with remarkable fluency," says one of his adversaries, "Luther was surpassed in eloquence by none of his contemporaries. Addressing his hearers from the pulpit, as if he had been agitated by some powerful passion, and adapting his action to the words, he affected their minds in a surprising manner, and carried them like a torrent whither he would. So much power, action, and eloquence, are rarely found amongst the people of the north."

But Luther, though the first, was only one among many, who at this period cried with a loud voice against the errors of Popery, and boldly proclaimed salvation through the blood of Jesus alone. The result was soon seen in the overthrow of the Papal dominion, and the establishment of Reformed churches throughout Germany, Switzerland, and England. The preaching of the Reformers was to the monks and friars truly like the roaring of a lion.

"When he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." (ver. 3, 4.) Various interpretations have been given of this verse: some explain them of the seven Crusades, and others of the seven continental wars which followed the Reformation; but Elliott has shewn, in a very satisfactory manner, that the voices of the thunders signify the voice of Antichrist, as opposing (yet imitating) the voice of Christ. The decrees and bulls of the Pope were regarded as oracles from heaven; and, when condemnatory, were usually called Papal thunders. "The *thunders* which shook the world," says Le Bas, "issued from the *seven* hills of Rome." John was about to write what these voices uttered, but it was said, "Write them not." They were not the true sayings of God, but false and an imposture; and John, in his symbolic character, as representing the elders of the Church on the earth, though about to write, was commanded to disregard them.

So we find, that Luther, in the beginning of his career, writing to the Pope, says, "I will acknowledge thy voice as the voice of Christ presiding and speaking in thee." As St. John was about to write, Luther was about to obey. But further study of Scripture, and further teaching of the Spirit, led him to believe that the Pope was Antichrist; and when the bull of excommunication came out against him in 1520, he performed a deed which electrified all Europe. He kindled a great fire at Wittemberg, amidst a vast concourse of people, and by the hands of the common hangman committed the bull, with the papal decrees and canons, to the flames. "Moreover, in his answer to the bull, he rejected and poured contempt on its thunders, as the infernal voices of Antichrist." God's servants no longer regarded the thunders of the Vatican.

"And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven and the things that therein are, and the earth and the things that therein are, and the sea and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." (ver. 5—7.)

In the attitude and oath of the angel, we are reminded of the parallel passage in the prophecies of Daniel (xii. 6, 7): "One said to the man clothed in linen, How long shall it be to the end of these wonders? And I heard," says he, "the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, that it shall be for a time, times, and an half; and when he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." Both of these remarkable and solemn oaths have reference to the same grand event,—the accomplishment of the mystery of God; the fulfilment of those predictions which had been uttered by his servants the prophets, of whom Daniel was one of the most distinguished, re-

specting the conflict which the Church should have to maintain, and the sufferings she should endure from her enemies,—especially from the one designated in Daniel as the “little horn that had eyes,” and in the Apocalypse, as “the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit,” that “shall make war against the witnesses, and overcome them.”

In both prophecies, a limit is assigned to the power of the enemy. *Here*, it is during the sounding of the seventh trumpet: in Daniel it terminates after a time and times and a half,—or three years and a half, which in prophetic language signify 1260 years. The expression in the oath “that there shall be *time* no longer,” is one for which a variety of explanations has been proposed, which I need not at present enumerate; but, viewing it in connection with the similar phrase of a *time* in Daniel, we may be permitted to suggest, that the words may be read thus: “that there shall be *no longer* than a *time*,” that is, no longer than 360 years from the oath of the angel, “until the mystery of God should be finished.”—360 years, therefore, from the Reformation, until the complete fulfilment of the prophecies concerning the Church and her opponents. The phrase, however, is translated by competent scholars, “the *time* shall not yet be, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel the mystery shall be finished.” The reason assigned is, that Christians, witnessing the remarkable events which attended the progress of the Reformation, were led to believe that the end of the dispensation was at hand,—that Antichrist was now revealed, and the consummation of all things must immediately follow. This was the opinion of Luther himself, and many of his contemporaries; therefore, this clause in the oath of the angel was given as a corrective to such an unfounded belief—an admonition that the end was not yet—that they must still exercise faith and patience, until the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Whichever meaning we adopt, it is evident that the idea of *delay* is intended to be conveyed, while the *certainty* of the coming event at an appointed time is confirmed to the Church by the oath of its unchangeable Head.

“And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again,

and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." (ver. 8—11.)

Every Protestant minister of the Gospel, receiving authority to preach, takes the open book, as it were, from the hand of the angel. Such was the belief of Luther, when on referring to his ordination, he said, "I received the Gospel, not from the hand of man, but from Christ." St. John is here called upon, as the representative of Christian ministers, to take the book and make it his food. Nothing beside is to form the subject of his teaching, or to be regarded as of authority in the Church. No Papal Bull—no Decrees of Councils—no human Creeds—no Articles of Faith—no Traditions of the Fathers—no Synodal Results, or Conferential Agreements: the Bible, and the Bible alone, is henceforward to be the only rule of faith and practice.

And it was by the powerful preaching of the simple truths of the Gospel, that such mighty conquests were achieved by the early Reformers. Their biblical sermons afforded a striking contrast to the discourses of the monks and friars, which were filled with ridiculous stories concerning purgatory, and absurd legends of pretended saints. These were no longer palatable; while, on the other hand, the common people heard the Gospel gladly: and many might have said, with the patriarch Job, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."

The Bible was indeed, in the early days of the Reformation, the joy and rejoicing of both preachers and people—it was desired more than gold—and was sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb; and in the keeping of its precepts was found great reward.

This was symbolized by St. John finding the Book in his mouth to be "sweet as honey;"—such was also the experience of Ezekiel when he ate the roll filled with lamentation and woe, against the house of Israel:—the words of God were *sweet*—but "he went in the *bitterness* of his spirit." And may we not understand what St. John says of the little book making his belly bitter, as significant of the bitter spirit which soon began to be engendered even among the Reformers themselves. In the controversies which arose on the meaning of the Scriptures, the loving spirit of the Gospel was neglected or contemned; and the word of God became as fire sent upon the earth. Heart-burnings, strife, and divisions arose among Protestants, who ought to have united as brethren against the common enemy; and ultimately they raised the sword of persecution against each other. Luther called in the arm of flesh to help him against Carlstadt, whom he was unable to confute by the Word of God: and in his disputes with Zwingle, he maintained his own dogmas with an unreasoning and unscriptural obstinacy, which gave evident token that the little book had made "his belly bitter."

So it has ever been from that day to the present; all attempts to rule the conscience by authority of men, through private interpretations of Scripture, have only produced opposition and suffering and bitterness of spirit.

Notwithstanding this, the Scriptures make wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus: and the Bible must therefore be sent forth into all lands.—"Thou must prophesy (or *preach*) again, said the angel to St. John, before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings." "Great was the company of preachers," who went forth, with the love of God in their hearts, and the Bible in their hands, in a few years after the commencement of the Reformation. The Gospel was preached not only in Germany, but in Sweden, Denmark, Pomerania, Livonia, Belgium, Spain and Italy, and throughout England and Scotland,—turning both princes and people from gross darkness unto marvellous light.

The light from heaven still shines farther and farther into the dark places of the earth—the little Book is sent forth *open* to

almost every nation and tribe of the sons of men, and will assuredly accomplish that whereunto it is sent.*

May we, who have the Bible constantly in our hands and in our heads, feel the power of its doctrines in our hearts! Jesus Christ is the sum and substance of the Scriptures; if he is precious to our souls, then will the little Book "be in our mouth sweet as honey."

"Thanks and praise,
Thanks and praise be ever thine,
That thy Word to us is given;
Teaching us with power divine,
That the Lord of earth and heaven,
Everlasting life for us to gain,
Once was slain.

"Lord our God,
May thy precious, saving word,
Till our race is here completed,
Light unto our path afford;
And, when in thy presence seated
We to thee will render for thy grace
Ceaseless praise."

* By no Protestant Church has the command "Thou must prophesy again," been attended to with more alacrity and diligence, than by the renewed Church of the Brethren. From her earliest formation the propagation of the Gospel has been the great object of her existence; as if the voice of the angel, "Thou must prophesy again," was ever sounding in her ears.

LECTURE IX.

THE MEASURING OF THE TEMPLE.—THE GENTILE COURT.—THE PERIOD OF 1260 DAYS.—SPREAD OF ARIANISM.—THE TWO WITNESSES.—REVELATION XI .1—7.

THE first thirteen verses of the 11th chapter are a continuation of the vision which commenced in the 10th; and it would have been more perspicuous, and probably subject to less misinterpretation, had the division in the chapter been made at the 14th verse, where we read, "The second woe is past; behold the third woe cometh quickly," which words form the connecting link, or continuation of the 9th chapter; where the effects of the first and second woes are described. The vision which intervenes, though strictly chronological in its arrangement, forms, as it were, an interlude in the scenic representation of the history of the world in its connection with the Church.

St. John, in his symbolic character, representing the ministering servants of Christ, had received the commission from the "mighty angel," "Thou must prophesy again." This was shewn to be predictive of the revival of Gospel preaching throughout the earth and the sea of the Roman empire, by the numerous and noble band of Reformers at the glorious era of the Reformation.

"And there was given to me, (the Apostle adds) a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." (ver. 1—2.)

The meaning of this passage has taxed the ingenuity and research of commentators—some supposing it to refer to the distinction

which always existed between the world and the Church,—or to nominal Christians as distinguished from true believers ; and others apply it to the establishment of Protestantism in the midst of Roman Catholic Christendom.

The references already made to the Temple service in the Apocalypse, may help to explain the meaning of this passage, especially when the original is more clearly rendered : “ And there was given me a reed like unto a rod, And the angel said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those that worship at it. And the court that is without the temple, cast out, and measure it not ; for it has been given to the Gentiles.”

The altar here is to be understood as signifying the Altar Court, the holy place, where the true worshippers assembled—distinct from the holy of holies, the inner sanctuary, the figure or type of heaven, into which there is no access for man but by the new and living way which Christ hath consecrated by his blood—which was prefigured by the High Priest entering into the temple sanctuary once a year with the blood of atonement. Hence we find the redeemed before the throne of God ascribing their salvation only to the blood of the Lamb. The Church on earth and the Church in heaven are one—it is only the vail that separates between the holy place or the altar court, and the holy of holies, the inner sanctuary. In the Altar Court stood the altar of incense, and the golden candlestick, and the table of shew-bread—shewing whence the true worshippers derive spiritual nourishment, heavenly light, and holiness of heart. Those in the Outer Court, or Court of the Gentiles, worship in an unhallowed manner ;—their prayers, unlike the prayers of the saints referred to in the 8th chapter, do not ascend, like incense from the golden censer out of the hand of the angel, before the throne of God.

Some have supposed the reed like a *rod*, to signify the temporal power of the state, by authority of which, Luther, and afterwards the Reformers in England, remodelled the Protestant Church—defining its doctrines and constituting its government. A rod is often used in Scripture as the symbol of kingly power: but in this

passage the meaning appears rather to be, that the reed put into John's hand was like a measuring rod, and he was called upon to use it as such. "Rise, and measure the temple of God." The word *rise*, here, implies to rouse up into a state of activity, or vigorous exertion. All the servants of God are called upon to be diligent in business, and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; to do whatsoever their hand findeth to do with their might: especially is this necessary in those who labour in holy things; in the defence of the Gospel, or in maintaining the purity of the Christian worship against all innovations of man. Hence, Timothy is exhorted by Paul, to be strong, to endure hardness, to shew himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, to be instant in season and out of season, making full proof of his ministry. And Titus, who was particularly appointed to establish the churches in Crete, is admonished to shew himself a pattern of good works, to exhort and rebuke with all authority:—to measure as it were the temple and the altar and them that worship therein; but to have no fellowship with unbelievers—not to consider the profane and idolatrous, who may surround the temple, and be treading in its courts, as any part of the Church of Christ, which is a "spiritual temple" built of "living stones." (Eph. ii. 20, 21.)

This Church of Christ, was, in a remarkable manner, renewed and constituted afresh at the Reformation, when Christian communities were formed in the midst of the apostate Roman world; which, as bearing the name of Christendom, might well be called the holy city;—the outward visible Church. But, though this explanation of the measuring of the temple is adopted by some of the ablest writers, and may be included in the meaning, (as many prophecies have a primary and secondary fulfilment,) yet for the better understanding of the whole passage, we must, I think, go back to a much earlier period than the days of Luther.

You will remember that when the sixth seal was opened, an interruption in the onward progress of the symbolical representation took place; and John saw the vision of the angel sealing the servants of God in their forehead—intimating the safety of the true

followers of Jesus, amidst all the troubles and disasters which should overwhelm the world. After that vision the seventh seal was opened. In a similar manner the sounding of the trumpets has been interrupted; the visions exhibiting the judgments on the earth have been suspended; and another vision is seen by the Apostle, wherein, first, the state of the true Church of Christ after the close of the sixth trumpet's sounding is prefigured; secondly, its *previous* history is declared in symbolical language by the mighty angel; and thirdly, its *future* condition is again exhibited to St. John, with the effects of its renovation upon the world. After this, the chronological order of the visions is resumed, by a reference, in the 14th verse, to the coming of the third woe, and the sounding of the trumpet of the seventh angel.

The first of these divisions of the interlude (as we may call it) in the grand scenic representation of the Apocalypse, formed the subject of our last lecture; and was explained by references to the events which immediately preceded and accompanied the great Reformation under Luther. I shall now read the verses which contain the second and third divisions—the retrospective and the future history of the Church; that is, retrospective and future, with reference to their position between the second and third woes.

“And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues,

as often as they will. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and an half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." (ver. 1—13).

This whole passage appears to be the history of the witnessing Church, (related by the mighty angel and seen by St. John,) from the time that Christianity triumphed over Paganism, until the complete establishment and political ascendancy of Protestantism after the Reformation. The first verse in the chapter we have already explained.

The Court of the temple mentioned in the second verse is alluded to by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, wherein he tells them, that they who were once afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ, who hath made them *one* with "the commonwealth of Israel," and "broken down the middle wall of partition:" (referring to that wall which separated the Court of the Gentiles from the Holy place in the temple.) And then the Apostle goes on to compare the Church, (or the community of saints,) to the temple itself:—"Now therefore," he says, "ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household

of God; and are *built* upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an *holy temple* in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." This may be adopted as an inspired comment on the Apocalyptic temple, its altar and its worshippers.

But the court without the temple is left out—"it is given unto the Gentiles." This undoubtedly refers to the merely visible and nominal worshippers;—as the spiritual or invisible portion of the Church constituted the holy place, screened from the outward eye by the wall of separation, within which Jesus, the great High Priest, is represented as walking "in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks." The distinction between the nominal and spiritual worshippers, or those in the holy place and those in the outer court, though it always existed, was not so palpable and broad in the primitive ages, as it became in the fourth century. Then indeed the *outer court* was "given to the Gentiles," and it even seemed to constitute the whole visible temple of God.

Our Lord had predicted the destruction of the Jewish polity, and that Jerusalem "should be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled." This was literally accomplished when the city was taken and destroyed by the Romans; and scarcely less literal was the accomplishment of the prediction in the Apocalypse. The pages of Gibbon, as well as more contemporary history, afford abundant proofs of the fact. "The religion of Constantine," he says, "achieved the final conquest of the Roman empire; but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals." "The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular theology, which tended to restore the reign of Polytheism." "The churches were filled with a multitude of unworthy proselytes, who had conformed from temporal motives to the reigning religion; and whilst they

devoutly imitated the postures, and recited the prayers of the faithful, they satisfied their conscience by the silent and sincere invocation of the gods of antiquity."

The court of the Christian temple was thus literally trodden by the Gentiles—Pagans they still were in heart and in secret—and Pagans they remained; only changing the name of their heathen god for that of some Christian saint.

The most respectable bishops, many of whom indeed were atheists or pagans, forgetting the spiritual nature of the religion of Jesus, persuaded themselves that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism, if they found some resemblance, some compensation in the bosom of Christianity—hence they permitted and encouraged the worship of saints and relics; and aided the progress of superstition by endorsing the innumerable miracles alleged to have been wrought by the power or efficacy of those popular objects of Christian idolatry.

Our Lord had said of himself, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me:" but this *Truth* was soon forgotten, if it was ever recognised in the "Court of the Gentiles"—a host of mediating Demons blocked up the *Way* to the Father—and a title to eternal *Life* was thought to be obtained, not through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, but by prayers and pilgrimages, and offerings at the shrine of a saint or the tomb of a martyr. In this manner was the outer court of the temple profaned and desecrated.

"The holy city (the visible Christian church) shall they tread under foot forty and two months." This is the same period of time, called in the next verse 1260 days, and in the following chapter a time and times and half a time; and is twice mentioned in the prophecies of Daniel. I shall not at present bring forward reasons drawn from the nature of the predictions themselves in favour of what is called the year-day principle, that is, assigning to each prophetic day the duration of a year. There is sufficient warrant in Scripture for this mode of interpretation; for instance, in the well-known prophecy of Daniel's seventy weeks, which in

the fulfilment proved to be exactly 490 years:—and in the still more parallel case of Ezekiel (iv. 2—6), who was commanded to lie 390 days on his left side to typify the iniquity of Israel, and 40 days on his right side to typify the iniquity of Judah. The meaning of these mystical days was declared by God himself: “I have laid upon thee the *years* of their iniquity, according to the number of the *days*, three hundred and ninety days. I have appointed thee each day for a year.” We may surely venture to take this as a key and guide to the meaning of the days in the symbolic visions of the Apocalypse.

Assigning therefore to the 42 months or 1260 days of the text, the duration of 1260 years—we may inquire when they commenced, and ascertain whether they have yet terminated. So far as I am aware, all commentators who have adopted the year-day principle, have considered the period of time indicated in this chapter, as coincident with the forty-two months of the 13th chapter, during which the Beast should have power given to him. Now this latter period is acknowledged by all expositors not to have commenced until a few years before or a few years after the year 600. So that, by the adoption of this date, we must believe the holy city still to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and the two witnesses to be even now prophesying in sackcloth. Mr. Elliott, one of the ablest and most consistent of commentators, labours hard to prove that this is really the case, although he admits that the witnesses ascended to the political heavens more than 200 years ago!

But I am persuaded that a much more early date than the end of the sixth century ought to be assigned as the beginning of the 1260 years in the passage before us;—and that the other period of 1260 years in the 13th chapter, during which power was given to the Beast, is distinct from this in its commencement, as it will necessarily be in its termination.

It is evident from history, ecclesiastical and secular, that the Paganizing of Christianity (as it may well be called) began early in the fourth century, when the Emperor heaped wealth and honours on the Church—and the Bishops were more distinguished

by luxury and superstition than by simplicity and piety. It was at this time too, when saints and martyrs were raised to the rank of mediators, that the Arian heresy began to spread throughout the church, and the Lord of life and glory was degraded from the throne of Divinity.

To settle the disputes which disturbed the empire in consequence of this heresy, and to fix the Creed of the Church (though not to purify its worship) the celebrated Council of Nice was summoned in the year 325. Through the influence of the Emperor the heresy of Arius was condemned. But such was the weakness or the indifference of the dignitaries both in Church and State, that within three years—that is, in the year 328, Arius was recalled from exile, his heresy was approved by the synod of Jerusalem, the orthodox were sent into banishment, and the true faith, says St. Athanasius, was scarcely to be found in the empire.

With these facts before us, we need not hesitate in fixing upon the year 328 as the commencement of the period of 1260 years, during which the holy city should be trodden under foot of the Gentiles. For then the Church had Anti-christianized itself by the adoption of the Arian creed; and the good seed of the word began to be choked by the poisonous weeds of Paganism, which (crushed but not eradicated) were springing up in rank luxuriance within the Temple court.*

The year 328 is also memorable for another event which had a mighty influence on the destinies of Christendom. For in that year the seat of empire was removed from Rome to Constantinople—which gave freer scope to the working of the mystery of iniquity—according to the prediction of St. Paul, that the revelation of

* "From the Council of Nice (says Gibbon) to the end of the seventh century, the peace and unity of the Church was invaded by spiritual wars about the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation.—Deeply did they affect the decline and fall of the empire.—During a long dream of superstition, (he adds) the Virgin and the saints, their visions and miracles, their relics and images, were preached by the monks and worshipped by the people."—*Decline and Fall*, vii. 54. 8vo. edit.

the man of sin was withheld, "until he who letteth shall be taken out of the way." By this transfer of the seat of imperial power, a great hindrance was removed from the ambitious path of the Bishop of Rome, and a vast accession to his dignity and influence was the result.

This period then, of 1260 years, which we believe began in the year 328, must have ended in the year 1588:—a year ever memorable in the history of England and of Protestantism—when the establishment of the one and the triumph of the other, was secured by the same blow which humbled the pride of Spain and of Popery.

To this event we shall have occasion again to refer, when we consider the ascension of the two witnesses into heaven:—whose 1260 days of prophesying in sackcloth undoubtedly commenced at the same time that the outer Court was given unto the Gentiles.

The one event was indeed a natural consequence of the other. For when Arianism and idolatry filled the outward and visible Church, there was no longer room for the spiritual service of God. The true worshippers betook themselves, as it were, entirely to the holy place, the court of the altar of incense. Among these was the celebrated Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, of whom it is said, that he stood almost alone—"faithful among the faithless."

But the Church never could become extinct. Our Lord had declared, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it;" and he had promised to be with his faithful people "always, even to the end of the world." However much then they might be depressed, and their numbers reduced by persecution or apostasy, a seed to serve Him would certainly remain from generation to generation. At the time to which the vision points our attention, the number of true believers was undoubtedly very small. The lamp of life illumined but few spots in the midst of the gross darkness which covered the people.

The small number, however, who remained faithful in the midst of the general apostasy are here called by Jesus, "my two witnesses." It has indeed been supposed by some, that this expression has reference to the Old and New Testament, as witnessing for Christ.

But we have already shewn that the Bible is symbolized by the "open book" in the hand of the angel, and therefore we cannot expect to find it again prefigured in the same vision under a different form. Besides the word **MARTYR**, which signifies *witness*, wherever it occurs elsewhere in the New Testament, means a person and not an inanimate object. The same inference results from what is said of their prophesying, for the verb 'to prophesy,' which occurs several hundred times in the Bible, is never used but of persons. Other commentators have supposed that the two witnesses are two individuals, such as Moses and Elias, or Elijah and John the Baptist, &c.—but no two witnesses such as this interpretation implies, have ever yet appeared; and if we understand the time of their witnessing as extending over a period of 1260 years, it is evident that two individuals cannot be intended.

In accordance with the representative system, so generally adopted throughout the Apocalypse, the two witnesses stand for many, or rather for a continuous succession. The number two is doubtless chosen, because that is the smallest number required by the Law, and approved by the Gospel. (Deut. xix. 5; Matt. xviii. 16.) "In the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established." It has also been observed that our Lord sent forth his disciples "two and two," to proclaim the kingdom of God; giving them power "to tread on serpents and scorpions," and "over all the power of the enemy." Similar are the powers conferred on the symbolical witnesses in the text. The principal Reformers also usually appeared, as it were, in pairs; such were John Huss and Jerome of Prague, Luther and Calvin, Cranmer and Ridley.

Besides this, several of the ablest Commentators have supposed that *two separate lines* of witnesses are intended:—and we shall find that history establishes this supposition as a fact; at least through several centuries there were two distinct witnessing Churches, one in the East and another in the West, who seem from the fourth or fifth century to have separated themselves from the dominant Greek and Roman hierarchies. They probably originated in those bands of poor and oppressed Christians, who migrated from the

T

Roman Empire, as St. Salvian (who lived in the fifth century) informs us, to obtain among the barbarians freedom from the tyranny of their rich and powerful Christian brethren, and that liberty of conscience and simplicity of worship which was no longer to be found within the confines of Christendom. Their presence among the barbarian tribes must have had a salutary influence, and may account for the singular fact of the Goths, Vandals, and other invading races, who overturned the Roman empire, never attempting to establish Paganism, but quietly adopting the religion and joining in the worship of those whom they conquered.

They are called "My two witnesses"—pointing out to us in an emphatic manner the great subject of their witnessing; viz., the Lord Jesus, his grace and his salvation; in opposition to the superstitions and antichristianism of the long contemporaneous Apostasy. This witnessing for Jesus, identifies them also as the same individuals spoken of in the next chapter (xii. 17), "who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

They are described "as the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks (or lamps) standing before the God of the whole earth." Candlesticks are explained by our Lord himself in the first chapter of the Revelation, as signifying Christian Churches—that is, communities of faithful souls, each individual member, by a consistent doctrine and life, shining as a light in the world.

The emblem of the *olive trees* may signify the ministers and Gospel preachers ministering to the Churches. For under the Mosaical dispensation, the olive tree alone supplied the oil which was permitted to be burnt in the lamps of the temple. And such is the explanation given of the same emblem in Zechariah (iv. 11), "I said what are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left? And what be these two olive-branches which through the two golden pipes empty the oil out of themselves? Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Now those who stood before the Lord, and were anointed for that purpose, were the Prophets and Priests who taught and ministered publicly, and in the congregations of

Israel. The counterpart to these, in the Christian dispensation, are Ministers and Evangelists.

"The two witnesses prophesy in sackcloth"—which among the Jews was the almost universal sign of mourning:—such, we may infer, was the condition of the witnesses. Like Lot, in the midst of Sodom, their righteous souls would be vexed by the prevailing apostasy and wickedness of the paganized Christians of the outer court—and from whom also they would suffer direct persecution. For those Gentiles who trod the holy city would be *politically supreme* during the 1260 years of their prophesying.

But it is next noted of the two witnesses, that *avenging power* is given unto them. "Fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies;" that is, symbolical, not real fire—not like Elijah who called down fire from heaven upon those sent against him; but like Jeremiah, to whom the Lord said, "I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them." (v. 14.)

They have power also to shut heaven that it rain not, to turn the waters into blood, and to smite the earth with plagues. As Elijah withheld the literal rain for three years and six months—the same period of 1260 days, during which the witnesses are said to prophesy—so the Divine grace and protection and blessing shall be withheld from those men who neglect and despise their preaching and doctrine. The prophet Isaiah (v. 6), compares the house of Israel to a vineyard, and they are thus threatened: "I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it:"—Amos also predicts a famine in the land (viii. 11), "Not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." In the same figurative and spiritual sense we may understand the power of the witnesses to turn water into blood and to smite the earth with plagues—even such power, as Moses and Aaron literally exhibited in the land of Egypt. And we may also remember, that the severe judgments of God denounced against those apostate nations who persecute his people, and which are inflicted from time to time in the course of Providence, are usually the conse-

quences of the rejection of the testimony which the witnesses have offered.

A mere outline of the history of those who witnessed for Jesus during the long period of 1260 years, would fill a volume. They have been traced in the East under the name of Paulicians, from the seventh century to the tenth, when remnants of them entered Europe. They were a small body of believers distinguished alike by the purity of their lives, and their sufferings for conscience sake; and doubtless were a portion of the sealed ones, the 144,000 followers of the Lamb.

The origin of the Paulicians is ascribed to an Armenian named Constantine, who was converted by reading the Scriptures, in the year 653; but as we are told that he obtained the sacred volume from a pious deacon, we may reasonably conclude that the principles of the Paulicians had existed from the primitive ages of Christianity, though at that time men first began to be called by this name. He applied himself zealously to the formation of a distinct Church whose only rule of faith and practice should be the word of God. His followers adopted the name of *Paulikiani*, or disciples of St. Paul. After labouring above thirty years in the propagation of the Gospel, persecution arose, and Constantine was stoned to death. But the Church he had formed, continued to increase, when an imperial decree was issued against them, by Justinian II. and great numbers were burnt alive. Towards the close of the eighth century, this band of witnesses was animated by a truly missionary spirit. Their leader Sergius, in one of his letters, says, "From east to west, and from north to south, I have run preaching the Gospel of Christ, and labouring with these my hands." Great success attended these labours, so that the Paulicians grew and multiplied greatly. But the image-worshipping Bishops again stirred up persecution against them. Some resisted, and maintained themselves in a defensive position on mount Argæus in Cappadocia. But Sergius himself suffered martyrdom about the year 830. Soon afterwards the Empress Theodora subjected the Paulicians to a persecution, more severe than any they had hitherto endured, and

it is stated that in the year 846 not less than 100,000 of them were put to death.*

But they still continued to spread. A colony, which acted also as a religious mission, was settled in Thrace. And in the tenth century, free toleration having been granted them by the Emperor John Zimisces, the city and district of Philippopolis, on the northern frontier of the Greek empire, was given to them for a possession. Here they existed till the thirteenth century; but during that interval, it appears they had undertaken many missionary enterprises in Italy and other countries of Western Europe, and became acquainted with the Waldenses, with whom they were afterwards united.

"It was in the country of the Albigeois, in the southern provinces of France, that the Paulicians were most deeply implanted; and the same vicissitudes of martyrdom and revenge which had been displayed in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates were repeated in the thirteenth century on the banks of the Rhone!—Pope Innocent III. surpassed the sanguinary fame of Theodora.—The visible assemblies of the Paulicians, or Albigeois, were extirpated by fire and sword; and the bleeding remnant escaped by flight, concealment, or Catholic conformity. But the invincible spirit which they had kindled still lived and breathed in the western world. In the state, in the church, and even in the cloister, a latent succession was preserved of the disciples of St. Paul; who protested against the tyranny of Rome, embraced the Bible as the rule of faith, and purified their creed from all the visions of the Gnostic theology."†

The Paulicians greatly resembled the character assigned to the Apocalyptic witnesses. They claimed for themselves a special

* In consequence of these severities, above 5,000 of the Paulicians renounced the allegiance of Antichristian Rome, and took refuge in Mount Tephrike in Armenia. In conjunction with the Saracens they harassed the neighbouring provinces with their hostile inroads. See Gibbon, vii. 62, edit. 1823.

† Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, vii. 69. 8vo. edit. 1823.

missionary appointment, for the confession and propagation of the truth, as it is in Jesus. "We and our fathers," they said, "being born apostles, have continued in the grace of Christ, and shall continue so to the end of the world." And though before the eyes of men the Catholics of the eastern and western Roman world seemed to constitute Christendom, yet did these Paulicians speak of them as apostates,—as belonging to the Gentile or outer court. "We are Christians," they said, "you are Romans." And St. Bernard reports of them, that "they call themselves Apostolics, or successors of the Apostles."

Notwithstanding many accusations of their enemies, their life and conversation seem to have been as unblameable as their labours were apostolic.* Their sole guide and rule was the word of God; and their acquaintance with it, both men and women, while the rest of the Christian world was involved in comparative ignorance, is spoken of as a striking literary phenomenon. This was produced, says a writer † who has traced their history with great minuteness, not merely by the reading of the scriptures in their public assemblies, but by the appointment of an order among them, whose duty it was to write out copies for the people to read in private. So that, as he observes, the Paulicians had a double supply of spiritual nourishment, and the candlestick continued to burn brightly amongst them. Through faith, derived from the word of God, they were enabled to sustain privations and sufferings; and to exhibit self-denial, zeal, and constancy, even unto death. "I will give power," saith Jesus, "to my two witnesses."

With the western line of witnesses for Christ,—the Waldenses,—we are all more or less acquainted. Their supposed origin from Peter Waldo or Valdes in the twelfth century, is evidently a mistake. There is proof of the existence of the Vallenses, or Men of

* "A confession of simple worship and blameless manners is extorted from their enemies," says Gibbon, vii. 69. 8vo. edit.

† Elliott, *Horæ Apoc.* ii. 540—593. 1st edit.; where the charges of heresy and immorality which have been brought against the Paulicians are most ably and successfully repelled.

the Valleys, long before his time; and it is probable he derived his name from them, not they from him. As early as the sixth century, indeed, there appear to have been many who had separated from the Romish communion, in doctrine and discipline, and had settled in the Alpine valleys of Piedmont, and in Dauphiny. To this effect is the constantly asserted tradition of the later Waldenses themselves, as reported by the Romish writers. Thus Reinerius, the famous Inquisitor, who wrote about the year 1250, says, "Of all heretical sects, that are or have been, none is more pernicious than that of the Leonists, (or Waldenses), first from its superior antiquity; for some say, it has lasted from the time of Sylvester; others from that of the Apostles." Afterwards, Pilichdorf, another Romish writer, thus repeats the tradition: "The sons of iniquity say falsely, before simple men, that their sect has endured from the time of Pope Sylvester, when the Church began to have possessions." So also writes Claude, the Archbishop of Turin, (in 1500): "Some of the heretics pretend that the sect has lasted from the times of Constantine the Great; and that, under one Leo, execrating the avarice of the then Pope Sylvester, they made the choice to live by themselves in simplicity and seclusion; also, that there had been transmitted from them the rule of Apostolic life to the present time." Other authors make similar declarations respecting them; from all which it appears that the Waldenses believed that they had existed as a Church from the time of the Apostles, and had inhabited their valleys from the days of Pope Sylvester. This is a remarkable tradition, which seems worthy of belief, though uncorroborated by any contemporary history. That they should have separated from the dominant visible Church in the time of Pope Sylvester, is what we might have expected from our knowledge of its corruptions and growing apostasy; as well as from the intimations of prophecy, that the witnesses of Jesus should be distinct as a church (or candlestick) from the world around them. The pontificate of Pope Sylvester lasted from 314 to 335:—consequently he lived in the very year 328, which has been assigned, I think upon sufficient grounds, as the commencement of the 1260

years of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; and it was in his days that the church obtained from the Emperor Constantine that wealth and influence which so fearfully accelerated its corruption. So that we have here a singular instance of tradition corroborating the deductions of history and of prophecy; while history, on the other hand, strengthens our belief in the tradition.

The doctrines of the Waldenses are set forth in a remarkable and genuine document, the "*Noble Lesson*," which was written about the year 1170. It also contains allusions to their labours and sufferings. "Now after the Apostles," it says, "were certain teachers who shewed the way of Jesus Christ our Saviour. These are found to the present time, but are manifest to only few people. They greatly wish to shew the way of Jesus Christ, but they are so persecuted, that they can do only little." They suffered punishment through the "lies and deceit" of their enemies. "But," it is added, "he who is thus persecuted strengthens himself greatly through the fear of the Lord." Here we perceive that the witnesses were indeed prophesying in sackcloth!

About this time they were joined by Peter Waldo, who distributed his wealth to the poor, gave himself to the preaching of the Gospel, and disseminated a translation of the Scriptures among the people. Soon afterwards, in consequence of severe persecution, scattered bands of Waldenses and Leonists (as they were also called) went every where preaching the Gospel with astonishing success. Before the end of the twelfth century, they had formed Churches in Spain, Italy, France, Flanders, Germany and Bohemia—in which latter country Peter Waldo finished his truly apostolical career.

The manner in which they conducted their missionary operations is related by the Inquisitor Reinerius. "The heretics," he says, "craftily devise how they may introduce themselves to the acquaintance of the noble and great. They exhibit to ladies and gentlemen tempting wares: and if asked, Have you any thing more to sell? he answers, I have more precious gems than these, and I will give them you, if you will not betray me to the clergy. Having received

security, he says, I have one brilliant gem from God, whereby men may have the knowledge of God. I have another, which shines so that it kindles the love of God in the heart of him who possesses it; and so of the others. He speaks metaphorically. He then recites some devout chapter. He also draws a comparison between the Romish Church and his own sect. . . . He says, there is hardly a teacher among the Catholics that knows by heart three connected chapters of the New Testament, but among us there is scarce a man or woman who cannot *repeat the text in the Vulgar tongue*. And because we have the true faith of Christ and teach a holy life and doctrine, these Scribes and Pharisees (the Clergy and Monks) without cause persecute us to death, as they did Christ . . . With these and other sayings the hearer is turned away from the Catholic faith, being seduced by their errors."—Another enemy, Lucas de Tuy, in 1230, says of them, "With unheard of wickedness they wrote *Tracts* and scattered them in mountain paths, that the shepherds might find and read them. They contained many Catholic truths, mixed with heretical statements;" and "even simple priests read the papers with great reverence," and "many were deceived."

Thus the witnesses continued to testify for Jesus. But it is added, "when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." This war is referred to in the 7th chapter of Daniel, and also in the 13th of the Apocalypse, and again in the 17th, where the woman, "drunken with the blood of the saints," is represented as riding on the beast. On comparing these passages with the 12th of Revelation, we find the origin of this war attributed to the wrath of the Dragon—"that old serpent called the Devil and Satan." He was permitted to stir up the powers of Christendom against the remnant who had "the testimony of Jesus Christ." This however did not take place *after* "they had finished their testimony"—as is clear from the context: but, as the expression may be rendered—"when they shall be completing their testimony." They continued to testify for Jesus, and against the corruptions of the visible Church, until they had

finished their course of 1260 years of prophesying in sackcloth :—
“loving not their lives unto the death,” for they knew that “great
would be their reward in heaven.”

“Cheer thy chosen witnesses, O Jesus,
Who thy dying love proclaim ;
That with joy they may to distant places
Bear thy great and glorious name :
By thy arm O may they be defended,
Till their pilgrimage on earth is ended,
And they are with thee at rest :
Lord, we pray, hear our request.”

LECTURE X.

THE WAR OF THE BEAST AGAINST THE WITNESSES.—THEIR DEATH.—
THEIR RESURRECTION.—THEIR ASCENSION.—THE EARTHQUAKE.—
FALL OF THE TENTH PART OF THE CITY.—THE SEVEN CHILLIADS.
—FEAR OF THE REMNANT.—GLORY GIVEN TO GOD.—REVELATION
XL 7—13.

THE prophesying of Christ's "two witnesses" during a period of 1260 years, has already occupied our attention. The *witnesses*, it was observed, were the faithful servants of God, who had separated themselves from the apostatized visible Church, and were more especially known in the east by the name of Paulicians, and in the west by that of Waldenses. The commencement of the days of their prophesying was in the year 328,—for then, as is evident from history, Christianity began to be Paganized, and the "outer court was given to the Gentiles;"—that is, men who were no better than heathens, in heart as in practice, were now admitted into the Church, taking the place of the true worshippers, and corrupting the simplicity of the Gospel with idolatrous rites and ceremonies. This was the result chiefly of the patronage of the Church by the Emperor Constantine, during the pontificate of Pope Sylvester. To that early period the Waldenses themselves assign their origin. From that time onward they continued as a distinct Church to witness for Jesus—enduring persecution, yet labouring for the spread of the Gospel. In this they were eminently successful; especially in the eleventh century, under Peter Waldo, when they formed churches in Italy, France, Spain, Flanders and Germany, and Bohemia.

Their success excited the bitter hostility of the Papal Church, which now, under the figure of the Wild Beast from the Abyss,

(or rather as the animating *Spirit* of the Beast), began to adopt measures for their extermination. The origin of the war against the saints, as has already been stated, we find in the 12th chapter of the Apocalypse, ascribed to the wrath of the Dragon—"the Devil or Satan:"—hence we may better understand the meaning of the figure that is employed; namely, "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." In prophetic language, the word *Beast*, or rather *Wild Beast*, signifies an empire, kingdom, or nation—the unreasoning multitudes that are banded together under one head or government. It is usual to apply this term to the Papacy; but this is a mistake, as I shall have occasion to shew at length hereafter. It will be sufficient here to notice, that the Papacy is symbolized as the "horn having eyes," or as the "mouth speaking great things," which is attached or "given to the Beast;" and again, in another passage, the Papacy in all its power and grandeur, is compared to a "woman" sitting *upon* the beast, guiding and ruling it, compelling it to do her will, and to carry her whither she would. This spirit of Popery, like the doctrines of Mohamedanism, (symbolized by the smoke which arose out of the same bottomless pit), came from him who is called the father of lies, and who was a murderer from the beginning.

This spirit, through the influence it had acquired over the nations of western Christendom,—which constituted the body of the Wild Beast,—impelled them to make "war upon the saints."

It will be sufficient to quote the words of Mede concerning the *beginning* of this war. "The Beast," he says, "made not war against the witnesses immediately from the commencement of his existence; but in the twelfth century, at which time the war *was* made by him against both Albigenses, Waldenses, and saints of Christ, called, as it might be, by whatever other name." Separate members of the Papacy had indeed persecuted the saints previously, and caused them to walk constantly clothed in sackcloth; but now it roused itself like a wild beast ready to spring upon its prey. As a collective and united body, in the third Lateran Council of 1179, the Papacy made war against the saints. This, we must remember,

was immediately after the great success which had attended the missionary labours of the Waldenses throughout the greater part of Europe. By this Council they were anathematised. Shelter was forbidden to be given to them while living, and burial when dead; and with them no man was to buy or sell. In 1183, they were denounced by the Pope's bull, and an inquisition established for their detection and suppression. In 1198, Innocent III. exhorted the prelates to gird themselves for the extirpation of the heretics. A crusade was, in consequence, proclaimed against them; and all western Christendom entered upon it as a war of extermination. Persecution followed the Waldenses into all their missions and settlements. But the Witnesses still continued to prophesy, and their testimony grew louder and more urgent. Wickliffe and the Lollards witnessed a good confession in England, and afterwards John Huss and the Hussites in Bohemia. At length, as the fifteenth century drew to a close—after a furious renewal of the crusades against the Waldenses of Dauphiny and Piedmont, and the Brethren in Bohemia—the great object of the Wild Beast from the abyss seemed on the eve of accomplishment. For it had been predicted, "He shall overcome them and kill them."

At the beginning of the sixteenth century Europe reposed in the deep sleep of spiritual death, under the iron yoke of the Papacy. "The Albigenses, Waldenses, and other opposers of Popery," says Mosheim, "had been suppressed and extinguished by the sword and by crafty management, and the wretched surviving remnant of Bohemian heretics, from their want of power, could attempt nothing, and were objects rather of contempt than fear." And against them was a cruel edict issued in the year 1508, wherein was commanded that all Picardins,* without distinction of either sex or age, should be punished with the loss of life. Sanguinary cruelties followed the promulgation of this barbarous decree, and in 1511, the last groans of the Brethren seemed to be stifled in

* A name by which the Bohemian Brethren and other heretics were distinguished.

their blood. Well may we exclaim in the solemn strains of Milton—

“Avenge, O Lord! thy slaughter’d saints, whose bones
Lie scatter’d on the Alpine mountains cold;
Ev’n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipp’d stocks and stones,
Forget not; in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese that roll’d
Mother with infant down the rocks.”

It was now believed, “that every heretic was exterminated.” The public testimony for Jesus had ceased. The witnesses lay *dead* or completely silenced, in the street of the Great City. This city, we have had already occasion to shew, was commensurate with the extent of the Roman empire. It was so politically: even as we find it here referred to figuratively. Its street, or broad place, the gathering place of nations, was as emphatically true at this time of the Rome of the Popes, as it had formerly been of the Rome of the Emperors:—“And where also,” as the prophecy declares, “our Lord was crucified.” Referring doubtlessly to the apostasy of the Roman Church, as the Apostle writes to the Hebrews, that by their *falling away* they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. (Heb. vi. 6.) This city is also called *Sodom*, because of its corruption of manners, and *Egypt*, for its tyranny and oppression of the people of God.

The dead *bodies* of the witnesses we read, lay *unburied* for three days and an half:—this we may understand as signifying that although the public testimony of the saints as a living Church of Jesus had ceased, yet there were still some, even though a small remnant, who yet worshipped God in secret. And this we find was actually the case. A few of the Waldenses still survived in their secluded Alpine valleys—and the ancient Brethren, though suppressed, were not exterminated. It may also have a more literal meaning in the re-enactment at this time of the decree, whereby the bodies of heretics were forbidden to be buried.

Many expositions have been given of the period of *the three days and a half* (in the prophetic style meaning three and a half years) during which the dead bodies of the witnesses lay exposed in the street of the Great City. Several remarkable depressions of Protestantism, lasting about three and a half years, followed by singular deliverances, have been adduced. But all are unsatisfactory, inasmuch as though the witnessing spirit was restrained in one place, yet it was free and vigorous in another. For this cause all explanations which refer to a period subsequent to the Reformation must be rejected.

There is only one period in the history of the Church in which this mysterious prophecy seems to have been exactly accomplished: and that is the period immediately preceding the appearance of Martin Luther. It has been examined with great minuteness by Mr. Elliott, and adduced by him as a most satisfactory explanation.

From the year 1512 to 1517, a Council, presided over by the Pope, was held at Rome, wherein were Deputies, Princes and Bishops, from all parts of Christendom. One of the express objects of this Council was the extirpation of *heresies*—and the particular *heretics* it had in view are mentioned in its 6th session, held in April 1513. These were not the *Lollards* or the *Waldenses*—they had already been stricken to the dust. But ere they fell, the standard of the cross had been caught by the remnant of the Bohemian Hussites, and was nobly borne aloft through the fiery stream of persecution. It was these—the ancient Church of the Brethren, who from the year 1504 had begun again to attract notice,—whom the Lateran Council had now in view. In the 8th session in December, 1513, a charge was issued, summoning them to appear and plead before the Council at its next session, on the 5th of May, 1514.

On the arrival of that important day, the Council met—but no Bohemian heretic appeared before it. No movement was made—no mouth was opened in support of the ancient heresies. The light that had so long glimmered in the candlestick was now extinguished. Christ's witnessing servants were silenced—they appeared as if dead—there was indeed a body, but the witnessing spirit was gone.

And if we turn to the history of the Brethren this seems really to have been the case. The persecution which overtook them in 1510, deprived them of the power of maintaining a public testimony.

The only intimation we have of their existence until the year 1522, is, that in 1511 they sent a copy of their Confession of Faith to Erasmus, who approved of it, but was afraid of hurting his own reputation by a public expression in its favour. During the interval that elapsed, we read that "after the year 1510, the Brethren could only worship God in secret, and in the district of Baron Schwamberg:"—and it is recorded in a manuscript history of the Brethren, that during this period there is nothing known concerning them, "and probably the congregation edified itself in silence."*

The summons of the Council in all probability never reached these still and secret worshippers; therefore we need not marvel that there was no response. Accordingly on the fifth May, the orator of the session ascended the pulpit, and amidst the applause of the assembled Council, triumphantly exclaimed, "There is an end of resistance to the Papal rule and religion; opposers there exist no more!" And the representatives of the "people and kindred and tongues and nations," who were there met together in the "broad place" of the Great City† looked on Christ's witnesses as dead! It seems scarce possible, says Elliott, we can be mistaken in regarding this day, May 5, 1514, as the *precise commencing date* of the three and a half years, during which their "dead bodies were not suffered to be put into graves."

And great rejoicing was made over them. The splendour of the

* For an examination of this unpublished history, (in 17 MS. vols.) I am indebted to the kindness of W. Mallalieu, Esq., the highly respected Treasurer of the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel, for whom it was transcribed from the original German, in the archives at Herrnhut. The work was written by the late learned and laborious Br. John Plitt.

† One of the Orators of the Council called the meeting place in the Lateran Church of Rome, the "central area, or broad place of the Western world."

feasts given by the Cardinals on the triumphal close of the Council is made the subject of special record:—"they *were merry*." "The assembled princes and prelates," says Dr. Waddington, "separated with complacency, confidence, and mutual congratulations on the peace, unity, and purity of the Church."

But their triumph was short. The Witnesses revived: "After three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet." And wonderfully was this accomplished in the events which followed. The cause of Christ seemed almost lost—Antichrist had shouted victory—the Church on earth was at the lowest point of depression, when suddenly was heard the *protesting* and *witnessing* voice of an obscure German monk: it waxed louder and louder—proclaiming salvation to men through the *free grace* of God alone. This was the testimony of Jesus—this was the prime doctrine taught by the former witnesses; and the Pope himself exclaimed, "The heretics *Huss and Jerome* are alive again in the person of Martin Luther." Equally remarkable was the *date* of Luther's first memorable act as a witness for the truth. There was to be an interval of three days and a half (or three and a half prophetic years) between the recognition of the *extinction* of the two witnesses by the assembled deputies of Christendom, and their *resuscitation*. Their extinction, we have seen, was pronounced on the 5th of May, 1514; and the well-known epoch of the Reformation, the day on which Luther posted his Theses on the Church door of Wittenberg, was the 31st October, 1517, which is an interval of exactly three and a half years,—precisely to a day the period predicted in the Apocalyptic prophecy.

Then "the breath of life from God entered into the slain witnesses, and they stood upon their feet." But they were not now, as formerly, a small and contemptible number—they rather resembled those over whom Ezekiel prophesied in the valley of dry bones, "and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

It was the prophetic anticipation of this great revival that comforted John Huss in his dungeon at Constance 100 years before.

Referring to a dream which he had just told to his friends, he said, "The Pope and the Bishops wish to destroy the image of Christ; but it shall be painted afresh in the hearts of Gospel preachers, better than myself; and I, awakening as it were from the dead, and rising from the grave, shall rejoice with exceeding great joy."

The witness-spirit revived not only in Luther and his fellow-labourers in Germany and Switzerland, but it also again animated the Brethren in Bohemia. A short time after Luther's appearance as a Reformer, they sent a deputation to congratulate him on the success attending the work he had begun, and to give him an account of their doctrine and constitution. With this he was greatly encouraged. The Brethren were then but few in number; and though they afterwards spread into Poland and Prussia, the hand of persecution fell repeatedly upon them. But they never seem to have forgotten their character as witnesses for Christ. I need not in this place refer to the renewal of the Church of the Brethren, and its simple and unceasing testimony, both in Christian and in heathen lands. Its history and its missionary labours are well known. May those who have inherited their name, never lose their spirit!

It is added in the prophecy, "Great fear fell upon them which saw the witnesses stand upon their feet." This is historically true of those who came into contact with Luther, and beheld the progress of the Reformation. It is said that the presence of the Reformer struck the monks motionless. Cardinal De Vio and his Italians, after their discussion with Luther at Augsburg, were utterly confounded, and filled with alarm and apprehension.* "The

* The intellectual power of the Reformer was felt and acknowledged by his opponents. After a discussion which ended in the signal discomfiture of the Cardinal, Dr. Staupitz urged him to resume the conference with Luther, and open a public disputation on the controverted points. But De Vio, alarmed at the thought of such a measure, exclaimed,—“I will argue no more with the beast. Those eyes of his are too deeply set in his head, and his looks have too much meaning in them.”—*D'Aubigné*, Hist. Reform. i. 460.

Papists in Germany," writes Luther himself, "are filled with fear. As we returned from the assembly at Smalcald, the priests enquired what was there concluded, whether for their ruin or safety." It was in that assembly, that the Reformers, by adopting the name of *Protestants*, proclaimed before the world, that they were but the witnesses of Christ revived;—they protested against the errors of Popery, and steadfastly maintained the truths revealed in the Word of God. From that day forward they "stood upon their feet," firmly fixed upon the Rock of Ages, and never again shall the Wild Beast from the Abyss have power to overcome them. He has indeed made war upon them since, again and again: but the Witness spirit has not been suppressed. It animated Luther when he stood before the Emperor and the Cardinals at Worms;—and it spread through Saxony, Prussia, Denmark, Sweden, Holland and England. The attempts of the Papal powers to overthrow Protestantism have been in vain. Charles the Fifth might have accomplished it; but by the overruling Providence of God, he got embroiled with Turkey, and then with France. Afterwards he attacked the Protestant princes, and in 1547 defeated them at Muhlburg, taking the Saxon Elector and the Landgrave of Hesse prisoners. Protestantism was now in jeopardy: but an unexpected deliverer was raised up. Maurice of Saxony who had betrayed the Protestant cause, now espoused it, and compelled Charles to flee from Germany. The celebrated Peace of Passau followed in 1552, by which full toleration was granted to Protestantism. And this, says a celebrated commentator "was the fulfilment of the Apocalyptic prefiguration of the ascent of the Witnesses into the political heaven:"*—though he, in another place, very inconsistently argues that they still continue prophesying in sackcloth! But *toleration* is not *ascendancy*; and nothing short of dominant ascendancy and complete security against the power of every enemy, can be meant by "the Witnesses ascending to heaven in a cloud, in the sight of their enemies." This prediction, I conceive, was not fulfilled till the year 1588.

* Elliott, vol. ii. 741, 1st edit.

The original text of verse 12, it has been shewn by Elliott, would be better rendered thus : "And *I* heard a voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither ; and they ascended up to heaven in the cloud." John now resumes his office as narrator of the events which passed in vision before him. The angel is no longer the speaker ; but the great voice which John hears, or the astounding event which is thereby prefigured, attracts his attention—and he sees the Witnesses, who had been standing on their feet, slowly ascend up to heaven in *the* cloud—the cloud previously spoken of, with which the mighty angel *was clothed*, for there is none other referred to. John, with his fellow apostles, had seen the Lord himself ascend to the heaven of heavens, from Mount Olivet, when a cloud received him out of their sight. Now he sees, in vision, his faithful Witnesses, who had been prophesying in sackcloth 1260 years—the Church which had remained so long in the wilderness—exalted by his almighty power, by his special intervention,* (signified by the cloud) to the political heavens, and secured against the power of the enemy, who "beheld" their ascent, but could not prevent it. The history of the Church shews us that this has taken place in no country except in ENGLAND.

Here the Witnesses stood upon their feet throughout the stormy reign of Henry VIII.—they basked in the short sunshine of Edward VI.—and endured the fires of persecution in the reign of his bigoted successor. In Queen Elizabeth's reign the Witnesses acquired strength and influence—and England was regarded as the bulwark of Protestantism both by its friends and its foes.* The Pope and the King of Spain (and Spain was then the mightiest kingdom in the world) determined to conquer England. The preparations for

* "The point on which Philip rested his highest glory, the perpetual object of his policy, was to support orthodoxy and exterminate heresy ; and, as the power and credit of Elizabeth were the chief bulwark of the Protestants, he hoped, if he could subdue that Princess, to acquire the eternal renown of re-uniting the whole Christian world in the Catholic communion."—*Hume, Hist. of England*, v. 276.

this enterprise occupied several years—and the armament was so great that it was said, “no power on earth is able to resist it.” Italy, Portugal, Naples, Sicily and Flanders, lent their aid to Spain; their army consisted of 50,000 veteran troops; and filled with vain hopes they proudly denominated their navy the “Invincible Armada.”

“All the Protestants throughout Europe” says Hume, “regarded this enterprise as the critical event which was to decide for ever the fate of their religion; and though unable, by reason of distance, to join their force to that of Elizabeth, they kept their eyes fixed on her conduct and fortune, and beheld with anxiety, mixed with admiration, the intrepid countenance with which she encountered that dreadful tempest which was every moment advancing towards her.”* But Elizabeth’s trust was in God, and in the loyalty and heroism of her subjects. She seemed to have heard “the great voice from heaven” and “never doubted of victory.” The Invincible Armada was soon found to be unworthy of its title, and fled before the skill and bravery of the English seamen. The Lord, ever helping those who put their trust in Him, scattered the discomfited fleet with a violent tempest—many were miserably wrecked on the coasts of Scotland and Ireland, and very few were permitted to return to Spain. “Thus,” it is written in Foxe’s *Martyrology*, “Thus did God miraculously defend us, against the dangerous intentions of our enemies;” and the Queen gratefully acknowledged the hand of Jehovah in her deliverance, not only by a public thanksgiving in St. Paul’s, but by the medal which she struck to commemorate the victory, on which was inscribed—“Thou didst blow with thy wind; the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.”

By this wonderful event, which had excited the hopes and the fears of the whole of Europe, Protestantism was rendered indestructible by violence from without; and the Witness Church in England was fixed in the heaven of political exaltation, where it

* Hume’s *History of England*, v. 273.

has remained ever since. The attempts which were made to shake it in the reigns of Charles II. and James II., resulted in its firmer establishment and more extensive influence. The triumph of the English secured also the independence of the Dutch, who had long struggled with indomitable energy and fortitude against the power of Spain.

These important events of the year 1588, by which Popery was humbled, and the naval supremacy of Spain for ever destroyed—lead us to the conclusion that this year was the termination of that prophetic term of 1260 years during which the Witnesses were to prophesy in sackcloth. It commenced, as I have shewn in the previous Lecture, in the year 328, when the visible Church became corrupt both in doctrine and practice. The true Church during that long period, though in a wilderness condition, kept the faith in its purity; and now, in the year 1588, we see it invested with power, and exalted as a city set on a hill. "This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." It was no silent and imperceptible change, but an event which drew the attention, and fixed the eyes of all Europe upon it. When the Witnesses ascended to heaven,* says St. John, "their enemies beheld them."

"And in the same hour," or at the same time, as it may be rendered, that is, during the progress of the events previously prefigured, "there was a great *earthquake*, and the tenth part of the city fell." Hitherto, in this chapter, the vision has had reference to the interior of Christendom—to the religious opinions and feelings of the inhabitants: now our attention is called to the exterior, or the political changes which took place in consequence of the spirit of life having been breathed into the Witnesses. An earthquake is the usual figure employed by profane as well as sacred writers to denote the political revolutions, and changes which occur in kingdoms and nations. And what greater changes ever took place than those which attended the Reformation begun

* For the use of this phrase in a political sense, see its application to the king of Babylon by Isaiah, ch. xiv. 13.

by Luther? The foundations of society were then upheaved, and the vibrations of the moral earthquake are felt even at the present day. There were divisions and strife throughout the empire—there were wars and rumours of wars when the Witnesses stood upon their feet. And, referring to the hostilities which commenced between France and Spain immediately after the Reformation, Robertson says, in his history of Charles V., “This war was the most general that had hitherto been kindled in Europe.”*

In the earthquake “the tenth part of the city fell.”—The city, as has been shewn on several occasions, signifies the Roman empire, or more particularly, that third part of it which remained after the division made by Constantine—and which, notwithstanding frequent changes, generally consisted, as it even now consists, of ten distinct kingdoms†—symbolized, as we shall afterwards find, by the ten horns of the Beast. One of the ten parts in the prophecy before us, is said to have fallen—fallen off, or been separated from the others. The kingdoms were all united religiously (rather than politically) to the Pope as the Head of Christendom: and the only one that, as a kingdom, cast off its allegiance to the Pope, and dis-

* Robertson's Works, vol. v. p. 145.

† Daubuz, in his Commentary on St. John, says, that the ten horns of the Beast, at the era of the Reformation, consisted of the following states:—1. Italy and Germany. 2. France. 3. Spain. 4. England. 5. Scotland. 6. Hungary. 7. Poland. 8. Denmark and Sweden. 9. Portugal. 10. Greece. But this enumeration seems to have been made without due consideration of what constituted the body of the Beast. This is shewn with great ability by Elliott, (*Horæ Apoc.*, part ii. ch. 2, and part iv. ch. 4.) And, according to Robertson, in his History of Charles V., the Roman empire (or “the city”) subject to the Pope at that time, comprised the following states, having distinct or independent governments:—1. France. 2. Spain. 3. Portugal. 4. Austria. 5. England. 6. Switzerland. 7. The Netherlands. 8. Tuscany. 9. Venice. 10. The Papal States. Genoa, Milan, and Savoy, were then subject to France; and Spain ruled over Naples, Sicily, and Sardinia. See Lecture XIX. for an enumeration of the ten horns of the Beast, as existing at the present time.

owned his Headship, was England. Henry VIII. renounced his supremacy—it was partially restored by Mary—but by Elizabeth it was finally and for ever rejected. And here we must distinguish between England, as no longer being a tenth part of the Great City; and the Church of God in England enjoying political distinction and security. The Kingdom is blessed because of the Church.

But, though it is true that England, as one of the ten kingdoms of Roman Christendom, fell away from Popery, and thus became separated from all ecclesiastical connection with the body of the Beast; yet, with due deference to the learned expositors who have given this interpretation of the text, it appears to me, that we are scarcely warranted in understanding “the tenth part of the city,” as having the precise signification of “one of the ten horns.” The phrase that is used, points rather to the tenth portion of the territory, than to any one of the ten kingdoms which might exist upon it. Viewed in this light, England was only about *one-fifteenth part*, instead of “the tenth part of the city;”^{*} but if we add to England

^{*} The following table of the territorial extent of Roman Christendom (or “the city,”) is quoted by Elliott, from Milner’s *Companion to the Atlas*. But to England he assigns 118,000 square miles, which includes the whole of the British isles; whereas neither Scotland nor Ireland ought to be included within the boundaries of the Roman empire.

England.....	58,000 square miles.
France	205,000 ”
Spain	183,000 ”
Portugal	39,000 ”
Switzerland	15,000 ”
Belgium	11,000 ”
Holland	13,000 ”
Austria	230,000 ”
Italy	130,000 ”

884,000

the other portions of "the city" which fell off from Popery, viz., Holland, several of the Swiss Cantons, and the provinces of France with the Palatinate west of the Rhine, which embraced Protestantism, we shall find the amount to be almost exactly "the tenth part." If this explanation be admitted, we obtain not only a more exact fulfilment of the prediction, but have the boundaries of "the city" more significantly pointed out: it may also help us to a clearer understanding of the latter part of the sentence—"in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand."

This expression, we may certainly infer, signifies political slaughter, as in many other places in the Apocalypse, though doubtless many thousands were literally slain during the wars which followed the Reformation. But the text here, has a further significancy: strictly rendered it is, "there were slain *seven chiliads, names of men*,"—which seems to refer to chieftainship or mode of government. In the Israelitish tribes we read of Rulers of thousands:—as in the well known passage in Micah, "Thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah,"—which in Matthew's Gospel is rendered, "Thou art not the least among the Princes of Judah." These seven chiliads or thousands then, who were slain, we may interpret as meaning *seven principedoms or states*, who were politically or ecclesiastically slain, or lost to and separated from, the Great City, or the Papacy.

The portions that fell away from Popery may be reckoned as follows:—

England.....	58,000 square miles.
Holland	13,000 "
Switzerland (two-thirds)	10,000 "
France (districts in).....	7,000 "
	88,000

This is a near approximation to "*the tenth part*;" but a closer investigation of the subject may shew that it was *exactly* the "tenth." For I have no means at present of ascertaining the actual extent of Protestant Switzerland and France about the close of the sixteenth century; and Milner's square miles are only given in round numbers.

"In looking for the fulfilment of this prophecy," says Elliott, "history directs us to that memorable revolution, by which during Queen Elizabeth's reign, the *Seven* Dutch United Provinces were emancipated from the Spanish yoke, and at the same time the Papal rule and religion destroyed in them."*

But to this interpretation there are several objections. The *seven* Dutch Provinces formed but *one* state; they were not governed by distinct rulers, or "names of men," as in the text: their chief or ruler was the king of Spain. During the Reformation those provinces were all included in the kingdom of the Netherlands or Low Countries, and had no separate jurisdiction. We have also seen how Holland, as well as England, was included within the boundaries of "the city," and ought to be considered as forming a portion of "the tenth part that fell." Besides, if the "seven chiliads, names of men," have reference to the division of the Israelitish tribes into thousands, each with its ruler or prince having authority, though subject to the king or federal government, we look in vain for a similar subordinate authority in the Netherlands. Again, the "rulers of thousands" appear to have had no jurisdiction in "the city," or capital of the kingdom; there the king especially governed, and held undivided rule. Beyond the boundaries of the city—in the country—each in his own district, the princes exercised a limited authority over their thousands.

Now we find something analogous to this state of things in the empire of Germany, especially as it existed at the period of the Reformation. The Emperor was the Head of the confederation of States which formed the Empire,† and though he ruled with absolute authority over his hereditary dominions, yet over the others his jurisdiction was limited, and in some cases only nominal, or regulated by the federal law. It was especially so in those states of northern Germany where the Reformation first commenced.

* *Hor. Apoc.* vol. ii., p. 749, 1st edit.

† See Lecture XIX., where he is shewn to be one of the heads of the Beast.

And here, if any where, we have a right to look for some of the effects of the "great earthquake," of which indeed it was the centre. If England and other states *within* "the city," formed the "tenth part" that fell, surely the Princes of the Reformation, who first raised the *Protest* against Popery, and whose territories lay *without* "the city,"* may be justly viewed as the seven chiliads or tribual subdivisions who were politically slain in "the earthquake"—cut off and separated from the Papal city. These "names of men"—the chiefs of the Protestant faith in Germany—are well known, and deserving of special record. They were the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Dukes of Wirtemberg, Lunenburgh and Brunswick, and the Prince of Anhalt. There were a few others of lesser note, but these "seven" were the chief "names," and had distinguished themselves in defence of the Reformation, long before the seven Dutch United Provinces had embraced its doctrines. Their states were among the first that became Protestant, and they continue Protestant to this day. Many changes have occurred in the limits of their respective territories—Brandenburgh, for instance, has extended into the kingdom of Prussia—but none have fallen back into Popery. Indeed it is remarkable that little or no alteration has taken place in the boundary line between Protestantism and Popery during the three hundred years that have elapsed since the heavings of the "great earthquake" subsided. The European nations that then received the Reformed faith retain it yet†—while those that remained Catholic are Catholic still.

* The Rhine was the northern boundary of the old Roman empire, and the territories of the Princes above referred to were all beyond that river.

† Bohemia may be thought by some to be an exception, but, though the Gospel was proclaimed in that country, Protestantism was never established, and the ruling powers, from the days of Huss, were ever opposed to any Reformation. The persecuting house of Austria soon quenched the light of the Gospel in the blood of those who had embraced it, after the time of Luther, as it had done before.

Besides the states already mentioned, that renounced Popery during the sixteenth century, there were the kingdoms of Denmark, Sweden, and Scotland. These, however, were beyond the circle of "the city," which St. John, in the Apocalypse had especially in view. Neither were they, like the seven German prince-doms, attached to it by any political tie. They were free and independent states; and suffered comparatively little from the shocks of the earthquake which attended the change of religion in other countries.*

It was indeed hoped by the French Protestants, who had survived the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, and all the miseries of the civil war, that France also would have ranked among the Protestant nations of Europe; and their hope bade fair to be realized, when Henry IV., a professing Protestant Prince, in 1589, ascended the throne of France.† But Henry was a lover of pleasure rather than a lover of God, and soon after his accession abjured the Protestant religion: and France, remaining as a Catholic state, has distinguished herself as a persecutor of Protestantism.

It is added, "*the remnant were affrighted.*" Some commentators consider this as referring to those who adhered to the Papal religion, in the midst of Protestant countries; and certainly, they had

* The Reformation also, at one time, had made great progress in Poland; but it was like the seed which fell on stony ground, it immediately sprang up, but because it had no root it withered away. The nobles of Poland were too intent on their party politics to give earnest heed to the claims of the Gospel, and to the true interests of their country; and while some relapsed into Popery, others sank into Socinianism. The common people soon followed their example. Having forsaken the truth, they were forsaken of God—and Poland has been blotted from the map of Europe.

† So great indeed was the spread of Protestantism in France, that "the learned Cocceius explained the fall of the tenth part of the city of the toleration of Protestantism in France after Henry the IVth's Edict of Nantes."

cause for fear by the rigorous treatment they sometimes experienced, and the enactment of penal statutes against them ; but the prediction was amply fulfilled on a much larger scale, by the fear which was produced throughout Catholic nations by the spread of Protestant principles ;—especially were they afraid when a German army sacked the city of Rome, and made the Pope himself prisoner. “This event (says the historian) filled all Europe with terror and astonishment.” Again were they affrighted, when the Protestants under Maurice of Saxony, suddenly made war upon Charles the Fifth, and compelled him to flee for his life. Still more were they terrified by the defeat of the Spanish Armada, when their vast preparations and confident hopes of conquest, were all buried in the mighty deep.

And “*glory was given to the God of heaven*”—but not by the Papists ; as competent scholars have shewn that the nominative in this clause refers not to the *remnant*, but to the *Witnesses* : and in history we find, that when the Catholics gave glory, it was to the *saints*, or to the *Virgin Mary*, as in the case of Philip of Spain, who, on the occasion of a great victory, glorified his patron saint, by building a splendid palace to his honour. Not so the Protestants : they glorified the God of heaven, ascribing to him all the honour of their successes. Queen Elizabeth, says an old annalist, “gave all the *glory to God*, and she was strengthened in her kingdom.” The Witnesses glorified God in their *sufferings*, as well as in their successes. A noble instance of this is given in the history of the magnanimous Elector, John Frederick of Saxony. He was the chief of the Protestant league, and being taken prisoner by the Emperor, was threatened with death, unless he abjured his religion. But he replied, “that he was determined rather to lose his dignity, his territories, nay even his life, than suffer himself to be separated from the word of God.” He believed the promise :—

“None e’er shall be ashamed,
Who wait upon the Lord !
Their shield and rock He’s named,
Who build upon his word !”

He *was* indeed deprived of his dominions, and suffered a long imprisonment. But God has declared, "them that honour me I will honour." Though *he* was brought low, his family has been exalted; and while the posterity of the persecuting Princes of that period perished in the third and fourth generations, his posterity are now allied to nearly all the crowned heads of Europe. One *lineal descendant* is King of Belgium,* and another is Heir Apparent to the mightiest monarchy in the world:—and it is to their honour and for their safety, that they still continue to "give glory to God."

But whether in adversity or in prosperity, it has ever been the distinguishing characteristic of Protestants, to give glory only to God. As nations or as individuals they acknowledge Him in all their ways. Unlike the Catholics, who when in trouble cry to the Virgin or to the saints for help—the Protestants know that help alone cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth, and that He is a very present help in time of trouble, for his ear is ever open to their cry. And they glorify God by putting their trust in him at all times, and by disregarding "lying vanities." (Ps. xxxi. 6).

In their days of thanksgiving for mercies and blessings, the Protestants give all the glory to God. "It is God alone that giveth us the victory:"—nor dare we associate any saint or idol with him. Protestants glorify the Lord for their deliverance from such debasing idolatry—and "have no other gods before him." And British Protestants, above all others, are bound to glorify God when they remember their high privileges, and the exalted station of England among the kingdoms of the earth. Well may they bless the Lord in the language of the king of Israel: (1 Chron. xxix. 11). "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord; and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine

* Since the delivery of this Lecture another *lineal descendant* has become King of Portugal.

hand is power and might ; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore our God we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

"O majestic Being!
Were but soul and body
Thee to serve at all times ready:
Might we, like the angels
Who behold thy glory,
With abasement sink before thee,
And through grace—be always,
In our whole demeanour,
To thy praise and honour."

LECTURE XI.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE THIRD WOE.—SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.—REVELATION XL 14—19.

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL WRITING OF THE SEVEN-SEALED BOOK.—
SKETCH OF THE SUCCEEDING VISIONS.

THE ascent of the Witnesses to heaven, or the permanent establishment of Protestantism, occupied our attention in the preceding Lecture; and the earthquake or political changes which attended it, have led many to suppose, that then only the Second Woe terminated, and that soon afterwards the Third commenced. But an attentive consideration of this chapter, has led me to a different conclusion.

The Second Woe has special reference to the Turks or Euphratean horsemen, and their overthrow of the Greek empire, which, it was foretold, they should accomplish in a given time—killing the third part of men, or depriving them of political existence. It has been already shewn, that the Turks did fulfil their mission by the capture of Constantinople, and the complete overthrow of the Eastern empire; and that too, exactly in the time which had been assigned. But not being able to perceive the commencement of the Third Woe till the era of the French Revolution, some commentators have prolonged the Second Woe till the year 1774, when the Turks were compelled to submit to a peace dictated by Russia and Austria. But the Turks, in fact, had long before that time ceased to be a woe to Europe. They had been repeatedly defeated, and driven back; their last victory, from which they reaped no benefit, was over the Poles in 1672—the island of Crete they had also taken in 1669. But an effectual barrier had been erected against them almost 150 years before, by the house of Austria

obtaining possession of Hungary. This was about the year 1525. On this event, the historian of the Ottoman empire remarks :—
“The advancement of that powerful family to the throne of Hungary, became the safeguard of Europe, and presented a dike over which the Turkish power could never pass.”

Greater woes, in fact, came upon Europe from that time forward, by the rivalry and ambition of the Princes of Christendom. So apparent is this in history, that I have no hesitation in assigning the beginning of the third woe, or the sounding of the seventh trumpet, to the year 1521, when hostilities commenced between the emperor Charles V. and the French king. War soon spread over Europe, and was attended with more disastrous results than any that arose from the incursions of the Turks into Western Christendom. *They* indeed invaded Italy in 1480, and threatened to plant the standard of Mohamed in the city of Rome, but being suddenly recalled by conspiracies at home, they never again were in a condition to renew their attempt on the ancient capital of the world. But what they only threatened, was fearfully executed only forty-seven years afterwards, by an army of Germans, Italians and Spaniards. This mixed host took the city of Rome in 1527, and, says Robertson, “it is impossible to describe or even to imagine the misery and horror of the scene which followed. Rome was never treated with so much cruelty by the barbarous and heathen Huns, Vandals, and Goths, as now by the bigoted subjects of a Catholic monarch.” Surely the third woe had now commenced, and the wrath of God had begun to be poured out on the nations of the earth, by “the seven angels having the seven last plagues.” This war was speedily followed by others. By that between Spain, and England and Holland ;—by the thirty years war in Germany ;—and by the wars of Louis XIV. of France ; all of which happened before the time usually assigned to the ending of the second woe, and all of which were terrible and disastrous, and woe-producing to the inhabitants of the whole of Western Europe, while the occasional incursions of the Turks during this period, were confined to its remote boundaries.

The third woe came quickly—compared with the interval of about two hundred years which elapsed between the first and second. For only seventy-two years intervened between the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, and the sack of Rome by the Germans; but the interval was not more than forty years, if we reckon from the time of the recall of the victorious Mohamedans from Italy, to the commencement of hostilities between the French and the Imperialists. Still more quickly did the third woe follow the Reformation under Luther. Scarcely four years had elapsed since he first raised his voice as a witness for Jesus, until the voice of war and the cries of woe were heard throughout Europe.

The error in fixing the commencement of the third woe so near our own times as the French Revolution, has originated in the supposition that the vision which is recorded in the tenth chapter, is prophetically successive to the event with which the previous chapter concludes. In its main incident (the prefiguration of the great Reformation) this is true; but the vision, as continued in the eleventh chapter, deals not with the present merely, but goes back to the history of the past, and stretches forward to a prefiguration of the future. It is indeed one of those interludes in the great drama of prophetic representation of which we have already spoken, exhibiting incidents connected with, but not strictly or chronologically tallying with the events which precede or follow it. There are several of these parentheses, as they may be termed, in the Apocalypse, to which we shall presently refer.

If the 14th verse of this 11th chapter then were read as following the end of the 9th chapter, the connection it forms between the second and third woes would be immediately perceived, and the error regarding the interval be avoided. It would then be seen, that a period of above three hundred years (which is the interval assigned by some of the ablest commentators) could never be meant by the expression "the third woe cometh quickly."

The third woe is introduced by the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Now, concerning this trumpet, we read in the 10th chapter, (ver. 7) "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel,

when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." What then does the sounding of this trumpet indicate as about to take place?

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament; and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." (xi. 15—19.)

Who can read this passage without being struck with the surpassing interest and importance of the events which are predicted? Great voices are heard in heaven—the voices of the angelic choirs, or of "the four living creatures before the throne"—announcing the coming of the long-expected reign of the Messiah upon the earth,—the twenty-four elders, the representatives of the Church, prolong the joyful strain, in deep and thankful adoration, and in full certainty of the speedy accomplishment of that glorious event, towards which the prayers and longings of the saints had been directed from the earliest ages. They speak of it, after the manner of prophecy (see 1 Sam. xv. 28; Exod. xv. 13)—in the *past* tense, rather than in the *present*, as if the kingdoms of the world were *already* the kingdom of our Lord, instead of this being the commencing act of their final subjugation. But the song of the elders points to other and most awful events which must first happen.—The anger of the nations of the earth; the wrath of God poured out upon them; the judgment of the dead; and the reward to be given

to the righteous. All these solemn events are comprehended in the sounding of the seventh trumpet. Certain portions have already been fulfilled; the most momentous are yet to come, and will come quickly; for, when we trace them in detail, as they are narrated to us in subsequent chapters of this mysterious book, we shall find that we are living on the eve of the out-pouring of the last of the seven vials, which mark the seven distinct blasts of the angel's trumpet—when a great voice shall be heard from the throne itself, saying, "It is done!"—followed by voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and a great earthquake, and when great Babylon shall drink of the wine of the fierceness of the wrath of God.

The abrupt manner in which the chapter before us terminates, and the recapitulation which is manifest in the visions of the three following chapters, lead us to conclude, that the account here given of what took place when "the seventh angel sounded," is only intended as a heading or short summary of what is afterwards to be more fully revealed. This fuller revelation commences in the 15th chapter, where we have a repetition of the same scene, with which this closes, viz., "the opening of the temple in heaven."

Each succeeding vision now shews more distinctly and vividly, the nature of the events which are prefigured—every outline is filled up, and the shadowy forms seem to acquire reality and substance. Our interest grows more intense with the progression of the scene, and the symbols that mark the coming catastrophe deepen in terrible solemnity.

To assist us in attaining a clearer view of the separate visions, and of the general scope of the whole prophecy, it may be useful to point out the boundaries of each scene, and to mark especially where the action is *retrospective* or explanatory, and when it becomes again *prospective* and historical. This is the more needful, as the very next vision, in the 12th chapter, seems to carry us back again to the early ages of Christianity, which were prefigured on the opening of the fifth seal, (ch. vi. 9.) when St. John "saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." These retrospective

visions, or *interludes*, as they may be called, have ever been the principal difficulties in the study of the Apocalypse. Nevertheless, it will appear, that while they interrupt the representation, they yet elucidate the meaning of the stupendous panorama.

I have often thought that the apparent obscurity of the book of Revelation would be much diminished, if the present divisions into chapters were somewhat altered, and those passages and visions which may be called supplemental, were printed in a different type. This would preserve to the eye that which is continuous and progressive in the prophetic history, and mark more distinctly that which is intended to be retrospective or explanatory. In the book, as it is now printed, the distinction is not observed, and by most readers it is apt to be overlooked.

The method of retrogression for explanation is used by the best writers of history, as must be well known to all who are acquainted with the pages of Gibbon or Hallam: this mode of writing is also adopted by Mosheim in his Ecclesiastical History. He divides each century into two parts: the first he calls the *external* history of the Church; and the second its *internal* history; so that there is alternate progress and retrogression throughout the sixteen centuries of his work. This may serve to remind us of the *external* and *internal* writing of the seven-sealed book or scroll in the hand of the Lamb:—it was written (we read in the fifth chapter) "*within and without*;"—and we may presume it contained all the Apocalyptic history. It would exhibit, in the unrolling or opening, the *internal* explanatory visions, parallel with or opposite to the more strictly chronological and pictorial history on the *exterior* of the scroll. This indeed was not an unusual mode of writing in ancient times—where additions were found necessary, or explanations were required. The same object is effected in modern times, by printing the explanatory remarks as *notes* at the foot of the page. "Now supposing the one series of visions to have been written *within* and the other *without*, and the parallelism marked by corresponding lines in the Apocalyptic-scroll, an evident fitness will appear in its form," says Elliott, "worthy of its Divine authorship, and such as no other explanation of it can suggest." (p. 768.)

The pictorial history contained in this book or scroll is continuous, throughout the opening of the first six seals, representing the principal events which occurred in the Roman empire, from the days of St. John to the downfall of Paganism. The seventh chapter is an interlude, exhibiting the condition of the Church during the same period—the sufferings of the saints and their promised reward. The 8th and 9th continue the history of the Roman earth until the destruction of the Greek empire by the Turks in 1453. This is symbolized by the sounding of the six trumpets. The 10th chapter and thirteen verses of the 11th, form another interlude, wherein John learns more of the great mystery of God in his dealings with the Church;—its great obscurity for a long period of time—its renewal and subsequent extension. The *Wild Beast* from the Sea by whom the saints are overcome, is also introduced, in a brief and striking manner. The 14th verse to the end of the chapter gives a synopsis, or table of contents, of the wonderful events which take place on the sounding of the seventh trumpet—events which carry the mind onward to the end of the present dispensation. All these subjects we have already considered at some length in the present and previous Lectures.

In the 12th chapter commences a series of remarkable visions—retrogressive and explanatory. The first exhibits the interior history of the Church from its last struggle with Paganism under the Emperor Diocletian, until its establishment by Constantine. This vision shews, in a clear and graphic manner, the efforts of Satan (under the emblem of a *Dragon*) to overthrow and destroy Christianity—and failing in this, his too successful attempts to corrupt it; prefigured as a flood which he casts out of his mouth. The nations of the earth within the bounds of the Roman empire are then, in the 13th chapter, symbolized as a beast with seven heads and ten horns, rising out of the sea, and shewing marks of a deadly wound on one of its heads—which we shall be able to shew from history to be predictive of the anarchy and confusion which prevailed in the Western empire on the invasion of the barbarous Goths and Huns, in the fifth century; when its *head*, or then form of Government,

was literally wounded to death; and nothing saved Rome from destruction, and the empire from entire dissolution, but the vigorous policy of the Popes, and the veneration which began to be attached to the successor of St. Peter. By the Popes, therefore, the *deadly wound* was healed—and by the *mouth* speaking blasphemies and to whom was given power, the Popes themselves, or rather the Papacy, is evidently prefigured. The identity of this *mouth* with the *little horn* of Daniel, which also had a “mouth speaking great things,” and “eyes of a man,” will be shewn when we come to consider the vision more in detail. I would only at present point to the *power* against the saints given to both—and the same limit of 1260 years assigned to their existence: and as the blasphemies began to be spoken in the year 606, when the Pope assumed the title of Universal Bishop, we may look for his complete overthrow in 1866.

But the Papacy, or the power of the Pope as a temporal Prince, is foreshewn in another vision in the 13th chapter: where a beast is described as coming up out of the earth—growing imperceptibly like a plant—a singular contrast to the sudden appearance of the former beast out of the sea. This slow and gradual growth is remarkably characteristic of the rise of the Papal power. It is difficult to ascertain its commencement. We only know that the Popes exercised authority ecclesiastical and temporal by degrees, until the year 604, when Gregory I. seized the reins of power, and established himself as a king in the city of Rome. The temporal power of the Popes has always been small: as compared with the strength of other states it has been a lamb among the beasts,—as the vision had declared it would be,—consisting of two small districts, which are here called two horns like a lamb. But it spake as a Dragon,—that is, with cunning and deceit. In this has ever lain the great strength of Popery. By this it was able to wield all the power of the first beast before him—that is, to make the kings of the earth subservient to its pleasure and obedient to its will. It deceived men by its pretended miracles, and great wonders. So that the power which the Dragon gave unto the first beast was transferred to this, which in outward appearance resembled a lamb.

All the cruelty which had characterized Paganism, when under the sway of the powers of darkness, soon began to be manifested by the Papal Government. To blasphemy against God was added the persecution of His people. "It was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations; and all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him [or obey him] whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

But the vision further represents this lamb-like beast as causing an image of the former wounded beast to be made, to which he gave life and power. This was exactly and historically fulfilled. The grandfather and father of Charlemagne had been assisted and encouraged by the Popes in their ambitious projects, and that conqueror himself in the year 800 was crowned at Rome by Pope Leo III. as "Emperor of the Holy Roman empire." Charlemagne accepted the title; assumed the headship of the Beast, and formed his Court, his officers, his very palace, on the model of the old Roman Emperors:—it was truly "the image of the beast." The Popes gloried in their work and anathematized all who would not yield obedience to the laws of the Emperor, and even the Emperors themselves were anathematized when disobedient to the Pope. And by and through these agents the war of the Dragon (or the Devil) against the saints was carried on.

This revived Roman empire is usually called the "Latin Empire" to distinguish it from the Greek: and it is rather singular that no commentator that I am aware of, has ever applied the "number of the Beast," the number 666, to the *Empire*, rather than to the *Church*. That well-known number, to which a multitude of meanings has been attached, has by the most ancient, as well as the ablest commentators, been interpreted as signifying "*Lateinos*," and applied to the Romish "Church." But the context in the 13th chapter points to the revived EMPIRE—"the image of the Beast." which the "Church of Rome" certainly was not. But nearly all

the expositors of the Apocalypse have been unable to see anything in these three beasts except *Popery*. Thus they make the first beast wounded to death symbolical of the *Papal authority*—the second lamb-like beast to mean the *Popish Clergy*—and the image of the beast to represent the *Popish General Councils*. Making, in fact, all to be *POPERY*. But this is contrary not only to the whole tenor of Prophecy, but to the very meaning of the term *BEAST*, or the power which the symbol represents; as is evident on comparing the interpretation given of the beasts in the visions of Daniel with those which have been brought under our notice in the Revelation. The word always signifies a *temporal power*,—a kingdom or empire, never a merely ecclesiastical or spiritual sovereignty. The symbol of the *spiritual* power is of a more elevated nature; it is the *eye* of a man,—the *mouth* speaking great things,—the *woman* riding on the Beast,—the false *prophet* working miracles.

The 14th chapter forms a remarkable contrast to that which precedes it. In this is depicted the 144,000, who had been sealed by the angel in a previous vision,—the then persecuted and afflicted Church of God,—now in a state of glorious felicity. They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and are without fault before the throne of God. This company is usually explained as signifying the whole company of believers—every one who dies in the faith; but there appears to be intended here only a certain number, who had distinguished themselves by special fidelity and holiness. They are described as not having been *defiled*; and as being the *first-fruits* unto God and to the Lamb. This latter expression of itself marks a distinction between them and the great body of the redeemed. We know there are various degrees of glory in heaven, even among the angelic spirits; and of those who turn many to righteousness it is said, they shall shine as the stars for ever and ever. The peculiar honour of the Apostles also shall be to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; and we are warranted in believing that some only, not all believers, shall have part in the first resurrection.

The 144,000, therefore, we may presume, to be a distinguished class of the redeemed, whose especial privilege and honour is to attend constantly on the Lamb, as his chosen people, his favoured companions. Now, to be partakers of this felicity in heaven, they must have resembled the Lamb while here upon earth; and we have seen in the course of our exposition, that the 144,000—the mystical sealed ones—denotes that remnant of the Church of God who were driven into obscurity, and for many centuries suffered patiently, meekly, passively,—who ever followed the example of our blessed Saviour, who, “when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” Truly, the same mind dwelt in them that was in Christ Jesus. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and loved not their lives unto the death: knowing that in heaven was reserved for them an enduring inheritance, and an eternal weight of glory. Of such it was said, “Persecution was their daily bread.”

This resignation to suffering was the peculiar mark of the Church in the ages preceding the Reformation; but we look for it almost in vain in the Church which has succeeded. Human policy has been mixed with Christian principle; and resistance to persecution has been resorted to, and justified. It was not so that the primitive Church acted, nor the Church that testified for Jesus in the dark ages. The saints, in those days, kept the example of their Master constantly in view; they remembered that he might by a word have had the assistance of twelve legions of angels to deliver *him* from suffering; but he chose rather to go “as a lamb to the slaughter.” In this characteristic of patient suffering, then, we may see their peculiar fitness to be the chosen companions of the Lamb, and to be called the **FIRST-FRUITS**, in contradistinction to the general *harvest* of the Christian Church.

The vision which follows, of the “angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth,” is receiving its special fulfilment in our own

day; but its anticipation must have gladdened the hearts of the suffering saints in the times to which we have just referred, and sustained their faith under many a fiery trial.

The judgments that are denounced by another angel on the mystical *Babylon* are yet to come. For Babylon, or the Papal power which it prefigures, is not yet overthrown, although her influence over the nations of the earth has been much weakened. Her fearful doom, however, we have reason to believe, is rapidly approaching; and with it also a peculiar blessedness, which will attend those who die in the Lord.

Another vision follows in the 14th chapter, wherein, by the symbolical reaping of the harvest, and gathering of the clusters of the vine, is pointed out the severe judgments of God upon the earth. The wars which followed the French Revolution may be supposed to denote the first, while the second is still future, and seems to be identical with the great battle of *Armageddon*, which is referred to under the seventh vial, and again detailed in the 19th chapter. The terrible struggle which is here predicted, and the decisive results which will follow, indicate the last great conflict between Antichrist and the Church,—a conflict of which the world in the present day seems to have an instinctive foreboding, and for which the nations of the earth appear to be even now preparing.* The issue is certain; for we know that He whose name is called the “Word of God,” shall go down to the battle, and, in the emphatic language of prophecy, shall “tread the *wine press* of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”

In the 15th chapter, the thread of the prophetic history is resumed, which had been broken off at the close of the 11th chapter; and it is carried on by means of the symbols of *seven vials*, which are successively poured out; and in them, it is said, “is filled up the wrath of God.” These seven vials follow on the sounding of the seventh trumpet, just as the seven trumpets were introduced

* May we not say that now (in 1855) the conflict has begun.

by the opening of the seventh seal. There was then a preparatory vision, exhibiting the state of the Church internally and externally, at the time when the trumpets began to sound. And so now, between the sounding of the seventh trumpet and the pouring out of the vials, St. John was favoured with several visions, shewing the condition of the Church in a later period; and tracing from its beginning the progress of that opposing power, which, "exalteth himself above all that is called God," and "whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." These visions we have already referred to. But there is another in the 15th chapter, where the Church on earth is represented as standing on a "sea of glass mingled with fire," and praising the Lord for the victory they had obtained over the Beast. This striking and triumphant vision has been interpreted as referring to England; where the Church of God, since the Reformation, has found a secure resting place; and where songs of thanksgiving have often been raised to heaven for the deliverance of Zion: England especially has been a refuge for the oppressed—for those who would not worship the Beast, nor receive his mark, nor the number of his name.

The temple of God is now represented as open, (chap. xv. 5.)—*i. e.* the Church on earth was made manifest at the era of the great Reformation; and the angels are seen by St. John prepared to pour out their vials of wrath upon the earth. These vials form the third woe, which began to be felt by the nations of Europe early in the sixteenth century, as we have already shewn. They are poured out *successively* and *distinctly*;—just as the seven trumpets sounded each one by itself—indicating separate and unconnected events. The *vials* are equally well defined—each one denotes a distinct judgment, and has its own peculiar limits, and particular course of action. I mention this especially, because certain commentators, in consequence of misunderstanding the ending of the second woe, have assigned to the commencement of the third such a late date, that they have been unable to find in the history of the Church a sufficient scope for the separate outpouring of each vial, and have

therefore mingled five of them together in a period of less than thirty years, during the wars arising out of the French Revolution; and one popular writer asserts, that the sixth vial and the seventh are now both being poured out. This mode of interpreting prophecy is rash, and savours of absurdity. The symbols employed cannot with any propriety be so interpreted. Indeed, it seems as difficult to imagine *two* showers of rain falling at the same time and place, as to suppose that the vials of the angels were mingled in their descent upon the earth. Our God is a God of order;—his great judgments in these last days of the Church are as distinct and consecutive as were the plagues in the land of Egypt, when he made bare his holy arm for the deliverance of his ancient people. But the historical explanation of these vials I design to make the subject of subsequent Lectures.

In the two following chapters, "Babylon the Great" is again exhibited in vision. In the first we see her in all the pride and glory of dominion—and such a minute description is attached as cannot fail to identify the symbol with the apostate and persecuting Church of Rome. Each representation of *this Church*, in the pictorial prophecy, grows in intensity and startling effect, as if the Spirit of God, by reiterated exhibitions under varying symbols, would leave all without excuse—that none should mistake her character, or be deceived by her cunning. But notwithstanding she is thus plainly delineated in the pages of inspiration, it is one of the singular characteristics of the present day, that many are found joining her communion, and that, not from among the poor and illiterate merely, but from among the learned and the noble—shewing that the wisdom or the wealth of this world is no protection against the wiles of Satan; and leading to the conclusion, that the knowledge which puffeth up, inspires men with contempt for the cross of Christ, and leads them away from God.

The end of all such will be like the predicted end of Babylon, as recorded in the 18th chapter—violent, fearful, and complete. Babylon, or the Roman Church, shall be thrown down and be found

no more. This will be immediately followed, as predicted in the 19th chapter, by the total overthrow of all the opposers of the truth, in the struggle to which we have already referred.

Then comes that blessed period which we usually term the *Millennium*, when Satan himself, the Dragon, the great instigator of the enemies of God and man, will be bound for a thousand years.

The first resurrection will then also take place, and Christ with his saints shall reign upon the earth. After the thousand years Satan shall be loosed again to tempt the nations, who, during the millennial period will not *all* be *holy*: as is evident from intimations in the prophecies of Isaiah and elsewhere. But holiness will predominate during that period—"righteousness and peace" *shall* reign in the earth—though they may not reign in every heart. Satan, however, will find many willing to listen to his suggestions in the latter days, and he will be permitted to lead them once more against the "camp of the saints." This is the great battle of Gog and Magog, referred to in the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel. But sudden destruction from the Lord awaits them; and the Devil, cast into the fiery lake, will never again disturb the renovated earth. Then follows the account of the general judgment, with which the 20th chapter closes.

The remaining portion of the Apocalypse exhibits in glorious visions the new heavens and the new earth, and the blessedness of those who shall dwell in the New Jerusalem, which will be erected on the earth which we now inhabit. Paradise shall thus be regained by man, and the earth, purified from sin, shall be restored to its pristine beauty and holiness, such as it was on the day when God saw every thing that he had made, and "behold it was very good."

A solemn question here forces itself on the mind—"Shall *we then* inhabit the earth?—and live in the enjoyment of that holiness and happiness which Adam lost by his disobedience?" Yes!—if we *live now* by faith on the *second Adam*, the Lord from heaven, and *love*

him who loved us and gave himself for us ; who, by the power of his Atonement, hath overcome the great Enemy, and re-opened for us the gates of Paradise. May each one raise his heart to heaven, and exclaim in the language of prayer and adoration :—

“ Arise, exert thy power,
Thou glorious Conqueror ;
Help us to obtain the prize,
Help us well to close our race,
That with thee above the skies,
Endless joys we may possess.”

LECTURE XII.

THE CHURCH IN THE FOURTH CENTURY.—PERSECUTION.—THE GREAT RED DRAGON.—THE MAN-CHILD.—SATAN CAST OUT OF HEAVEN.—THE FLOOD FROM THE SERPENT'S MOUTH.—FLIGHT OF THE WOMAN INTO THE WILDERNESS.—REVELATION XII.

“AND there appeared a great wonder in heaven ; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars : and she being with child cried, travailing in birth and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven ; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth : and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron : and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. And there was war in heaven : Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and

night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." (ch. xii.)

In the first eleven chapters of the Apocalypse, the prophetic history of the Church and of the world, is sketched out to the end of the present dispensation,—but the outward and more visible agents only were exhibited in figures and symbols, even as the effects they produced were made manifest by the changes that took place in the earth. But *now*, in the chapter just read, the hidden springs of action are revealed, and the interior and invisible powers brought upon the stage. In the 11th chapter, indeed a partial revelation of this had been made to St. John, when, in connection with the history of the two witnesses, he is told, "the Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall kill them." This brief but startling intimation must have excited in the mind of the Apostle, intense desire of further information regarding so terrible and so destructive a power. And, as if hastening to gratify this desire, the resuscitation of the witnesses, and the effects that followed are briefly noticed—and immediately afterward the trumpet of the seventh angel sounds. We had been informed, that when "he shall begin to sound, the

mystery of God should be finished;”—but instead of an extended panorama of the stupendous events which must then take place, “great voices in heaven” only announce the grand and glorious result: a glimpse merely is obtained of “the open temple of God,” and the scene passes away amidst lightnings and thunderings, and earthquake and hail.

Now the scene is entirely changed. “A great wonder appears in heaven;”—Zion, the Church of God, is set before us as “a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars,” reminding us of similar description of the Church in another symbolical book, “looking forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” This is said by Solomon (Songs, vi. 10), with special reference to his bride, but spiritually of the ancient Church; and leading us unhesitatingly to apply the description in the Apocalypse, not to the mere outward and visible Church, but to those spiritual members, who are elsewhere designated as the 144,000 sealed ones, and afterward as the “Bride, the Lamb’s wife”—“clothed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints;” even the wedding garment, which they receive from the King of Saints, who is also the Sun of righteousness; and by whose reflected light they shine in the beauty of holiness.

“With the moon under their feet,” as pilgrims travelling Zionwards, whose affections are not set upon the earth; for their conversation, their citizenship, all their objects of interest are in heaven. “On her head was a crown of twelve stars:”—“the stars are the angels of the churches,”—the overseers of the great dioceses, which, about the era of Constantine, were twelve in number. These might well be termed the glory of the Church and her crown of rejoicing. The whole description indicates that the Church was then enjoying a certain amount of outward prosperity, combined with much internal purity of doctrine and practice.

And we are naturally led to inquire, To what particular period in the history of the Church does the vision point? The general

diffusion of Christianity throughout the Roman empire is acknowledged even by Gibbon to have preceded the reign of Diocletian ; and Justin Martyr declares,* " that there exists not a people, whether Greek or Barbarian, among whom prayers are not offered up in the name of a crucified Jesus to the Father and Creator of all things." No doubt tares were sown among the wheat; and many erroneous notions and unscriptural practices began to take root in the Church. But the fires of persecution checked their growth for a time: and the Church continued to fight the good fight, and to keep the faith; "praising God, and having favour with all the people."

Especially was this the case during the first eighteen years of the reign of Diocletian. "His wife and daughter listened with attention and respect to the truths of Christianity," says Gibbon; "and the chief officers of his household protected by their powerful influence the faith which they had embraced; and enjoyed, with their wives, their children, and their slaves, the free exercise of the Christian religion. The most important offices were bestowed on persons of ability who had forsaken the worship of idols. The Bishops held an honourable rank in their respective provinces, and were treated with distinction and respect, not only by the people but by the magistrates themselves. Almost in every city the ancient churches were found insufficient to contain the increasing number of proselytes; and in their place, more steady and capacious edifices were erected for the public worship of the faithful." "But prosperity," he adds, "had relaxed the nerves of discipline; and the lively faith which still distinguished the Christians from the Gentiles, was shewn much less in their lives than in their controversial writings."

This then was the condition of the Church just before the last and greatest persecution which it was called upon to endure from the Pagan emperors.

* In his *Apology*, addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, who died A. D. 161.

There is therefore in this vision (recorded in the twelfth chapter,) a retrogression, as has been shewn at some length in a previous Lecture. We are carried back to the era of the opening of the fifth seal, when the blood of the early martyrs cried with a loud voice to heaven. From that period onward, that is, from the establishment of Christianity by Constantine the Great, the history of the Church, and its contest with a new and more potent enemy than Paganism, is set before us in a series of wonderful pictures, and graphic descriptions, which demand our serious and patient attention; and more especially at the present time, when we believe the last effort of the Prince of Darkness, the "great red Dragon," is about to be made, which will terminate in his complete overthrow, and in the consequent dawning upon the earth of the day of millennial blessedness.

In turning again to the vision of the Woman, we read—"She being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered." It is noted by commentators, that from the out-pouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, until the edict of Constantine tolerating the Christians, was 280 years—which, taking a day for a year, is the usual period of pregnancy. As already stated, the Church had grown until it pervaded every portion of the empire; and it was evident that Paganism and Christianity could not exist much longer together without coming into collision:—and, as the sword was held by an idolator, a violent persecution of the Church might be anticipated—its destruction probably attempted.

And this soon took place. "The zeal and rapid progress of the Christians," says Gibbon, "awakened the polytheists from their supine indifference in the cause of those deities whom custom and education had taught them to revere. The mutual provocations of religious war, which had already continued above two hundred years, exasperated the animosity of the contending parties." After many consultations between the Emperors Galerius and Diocletian, the Christians were dismissed from the Imperial household, and in February, 303, an edict was issued, commanding a general persecution.

Now indeed was the woman "in pain to be delivered"—the throes of childbirth came upon her, and her sufferings were extreme. Perhaps it may be said, the Church had to pass through the fire, that she might be purified; and doubtless this was true, for much dross was now mixed with the gold. But we need not be surprised at corruptions in the fourth century, when we turn to the Epistles addressed to the Seven Churches in the first—filled as they are with admonitions, warnings, and threatenings. Still there were thousands of faithful souls in the Church "who loved not their lives unto the death," and "who overcame the old serpent by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;" whose example might well encourage the faint, and fix the wavering brethren: while their faith and patience and constancy must have had a powerful effect on the Pagans around them, and no doubt paved the way for that wonderful and general change of religion throughout the Roman empire, which followed the cessation of persecution, and the assumption by Constantine of the Imperial power. The character and the sufferings of the faithful witnesses for Jesus have, however, already occupied our attention on a previous occasion.

The great Red Dragon, who is described in the vision as opposed to the sun-clothed Woman, and eager to devour her offspring, is evidently symbolical of the Pagan Roman empire; that empire or fourth kingdom, which is also spoken of in the prophecies of Daniel, and there prefigured as a "beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, diverse from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns." In this vision it is described as having seven heads and ten horns. It is the same beast afterwards seen by St. John as having one of its heads wounded to death—and it again appears in the 17th chapter, as scarlet-coloured, and full of names of blasphemy. In these different forms is indicated its varying phases of strength and activity, and especially the intensity of its hatred and malice against the Church and her Head. The *animating spirit*, the *soul* of the symbolical Dragon, was Satan, the Devil, as he is called in this 12th chapter. He is elsewhere called the Prince of

the power of the air, and the God of this world. And when tempting our Saviour in the wilderness, he asserted that the kingdoms of this world were delivered into his hand, and their power and glory he gave to whomsoever he would. Now, the great object of our Saviour's coming into the world, was the establishment of a kingdom in opposition to that over which Satan reigned; and this he accomplishes by the preaching of the Gospel; for when the kingdom of heaven was first proclaimed by the seventy disciples, our Lord declared, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven;" and on another occasion, when referring to his death upon the cross, and the glory that should follow, he exclaimed, "Now shall the Prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

This instance of the figure of a Dragon standing as a symbol both of the *outward* body and the *inner* spirit, as the agent and the master—must be borne in mind; for we shall afterwards find the beasts of the thirteenth and seventeenth chapters spoken of in the like convertible language, and from inattention to this peculiarity, it has led some writers into serious mistakes.

The tail of the Dragon, drawing the "third part of the stars of heaven and casting them to the earth," has been supposed to indicate the effects of the emperor Galerius's decrees, by which, in the third part of the empire over which his power extended; the Bishops of the Church (the stars) were exiled or put to death. But I rather think it means, that he, as ruler of the third portion of the empire, drew after him all the governors and other officers in that third part, uniting them with himself in his persecution of the Christians, and in his war against Constantine, by whom both he and they were overthrown and cast down from the political heavens, from all places of honour and authority, never again to rise.

The "war in heaven"—that contest for the supreme authority, wherein Michael and his angels fought and overcame the Dragon and his angels—refers undoubtedly to that great struggle between the emperor Constantine and the heathen persecutors, Diocletian,

Galerius, Maximin, and Licinius. But this struggle, and its results, has already occupied our attention when explaining the opening of the sixth seal.

The Woman, or the Church, for whose sake this mighty contest arose, it is added, "brought forth a man-child." Many opinions have been broached concerning this man-child, who "was caught up to the throne of God;" but, as we have seen that the "heavens," so often mentioned in the Apocalypse, can have reference only to a state of exalted honour and authority in this world, either in church or state; so we may conclude, that the man-child here so highly exalted, was one raised to supreme authority, both civil and ecclesiastical. This opinion is corroborated by the use of similar phraseology in other passages of Scripture. The "man of sin" shall so exalt himself, says St. Paul to the Thessalonians, "that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And Ezekiel tells the king of Tyre, that he should be "cast out of the mountain of God," because his heart was lifted up, and he said, "I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas." In both cases, the highest and the most irresponsible earthly power is indicated—though the one refers to a spiritual and the other to a temporal potentate.

The prediction of the "man-child" was remarkably fulfilled in the life of Constantine the Great: who, in the providence of God, was, notwithstanding all the opposition he encountered, enabled to ascend to the highest dignity, to the chief seat both in the political and the ecclesiastical heavens; for the Church, through her Bishops, as well as the governors of the provinces, submitted to his authority. He was, indeed, truly the offspring of the Church; for when the contest began between Paganism and Christianity, he boldly and unhesitatingly threw himself into the ranks of the latter, and conquered by the sign of the Cross.

But it may be further observed, that in the Apocalypse, an individual is usually put for a class: so here also, the man-child, the offspring of the Church, represents the *succession* of Christian emperors that thenceforth ruled the destinies of the world as

with a rod of iron. But it may have a still farther meaning—and it is one of the marvellous peculiarities of God's revelations, that the simple language and graphic sketches he has given for our guidance are so appropriate, and so pregnant with meaning, that they not only refer at once to an individual and to a class, but to spirit as well as to matter—to things temporal and to things ecclesiastical. The man-child may therefore symbolize the *bishops* of the Church, who, during the persecutions, were foremost in danger and in sufferings; but, under the Christian Emperors, were exalted to the highest honours.* No better illustration of this can be given, than by pointing to the celebrated Council of Nice, where the Bishops from all parts of Christendom assembled at the call of Constantine, A. D. 325,—the Emperor presiding over them in the imperial palace—and from whom issued those canons and decrees which ruled and fixed the faith of the Church and the world. Succeeding Councils assumed equal power, and the nations soon discovered, that by their decrees (usurping the place of God's word) they were indeed ruled as with a rod of iron.

The "place of the Dragon and his angels was found no more in heaven;" for after they were dispossessed of the authority which as Pagans they had held in the high places, the rulers of the empire were thenceforward (with the brief and partial exception of Julian) avowedly Christian; and Paganism was the religion only of the few and the despised. So that the accusations against the Brethren (referred to in the 10th verse) by the emissaries of Satan,

*The Bishops were, in a peculiar manner, the offspring of the Church: but they soon forsook the "primitive way;" and the wealth and dignity lavished upon them by Constantine and his successors, so puffed them up with pride, that, like Diotrophes, they not only "loved to have the pre-eminence" among men; but like him also "prated against" the truth "with malicious words," and "cast the brethren out of the church." (3 John, 10.) The "man-child, who was to rule," is verily distinct from the "remnant of the woman's seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

were at an end; and this called forth joyful thanksgivings and praises to God—united with cheerful anticipations of the speedy arrival of “salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ.” The power of the Evil Spirit himself, we are led to infer, was also diminished, or at least the violent mode of its operation was changed and curbed: he was “cast down to the earth,” and no longer permitted to accuse the saints in the presence of God as he did in the case of Job and of Joshua the high priest, and doubtless of numberless others beside. The passions also of the seven-headed Beast, which Satan animated and controlled, were curbed and ameliorated by the mild spirit of Christianity; for the world at large, though despising religion, feels and acknowledges its influence, and ever shapes its conduct and its institutions by the precepts of the Gospel.

But while the Church rejoices, a voice of woe goes forth “against the inhabitants of the earth.” Three distinct “woes” had been denounced, which succeeded each other on the sounding of the last three trumpets; but those had reference especially to the temporal or outward troubles of the earth; this woe points to the internal and spiritual state. It is because the Devil has come down, “having great wrath,” knowing that “he hath but a short time.” He had been foiled in the contest with Michael spiritually, as his agents had been overcome by Constantine temporally. Violence and persecution will therefore no longer avail. But he who deceiveth the whole world does not forego his intentions. The man-child had escaped, but he attempts to drown the mother, and “casts out of his mouth water as a flood to carry her away.”

The Greek word here used for *flood*, conveys the idea of an impetuous *torrent*, or a river which bursts its embankments and spreads destruction on every side. Certainly no other image could more accurately describe the state of Christendom within ten years after the accession of the first Christian emperor.

Heresies multiplied on every side,—superstitions increased in number and intensity,—dissensions among the Bishops became

frequent and scandalous,—and the spirituality of Christian worship became sensuous and idolatrous; but especially was the Church in danger of destruction from the pestilential heresy of Arius.

Some commentators indeed apply this flood to the invasion of the Barbarians who overrun the empire in the fifth and sixth centuries, and consider it as identical with the sea mentioned in the following chapter; but the two words in the original are very different in meaning; and we are at a loss to understand how the Barbarians could be both the “flood,” and the “earth” to swallow the flood! Neither does the symbol of the Dragon casting water out of his mouth to drown the Woman, appear to receive its true interpretation by referring it to the Devil instigating the Barbarians to invade the empire. He had already been described as fighting—attempting by his agents to overwhelm the Church by force. He had failed; and there was no longer hope of renewing successfully the same attempt. The figure is accordingly changed: and is now more in accordance with the nature of the “old serpent” which deceiveth the whole world. He “casts a flood out of his mouth;” and what can we expect from a serpent’s mouth but poison?—Poison for the soul. Such are heresies and false doctrines.

Doctrine is frequently symbolized by water. Moses says, “My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew.” “Ho, every one that thirsteth,” says the Prophet, “come ye to the waters”; and Jesus stood and cried, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.” We are therefore warranted in explaining the torrent from the Dragon’s mouth, as some sudden, impetuous and wide-spreading deadly doctrine. And on referring to history we see the force of the figure. Notwithstanding the corruptions which prevailed in the Church, the grand and distinctive doctrine of Christianity, the divinity of Jesus, and the consequent efficacy of His blood as an atonement for sin, was maintained and cherished by all.

“Christ crucified we own as God,
Though we were scorn’d by all mankind,

He is our motto most avow'd ;
To such in spirit we are join'd,
And them as brethren gladly own,
Who by this Shibboleth are known."

This was the thrilling song of the confessors. This was the secret source of the vitality of the Church. By this the noble army of martyrs conquered. Satan knew its power ; for "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." To destroy therefore or to neutralize this doctrine, was the object of the Devil when he came down "upon the earth having great wrath." His agent in this work was Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, who almost on the instant of the accession of Constantine, began to disseminate the heresy which still bears his name. He was subtle, learned, and of blameless life ; but striving to be wise above that which is written, he became "puffed up with pride, and fell into the condemnation of the devil."

In an incredibly short space of time his doctrine spread throughout the Eastern Church, and raised the fiercest animosities amongst its members. "The provinces of Egypt and Asia," says Gibbon, "had deeply imbibed the venom of the Arian controversy." The Emperor attempted to stay the plague, and the General Council of Nice condemned the heresy. But it was a condemnation not dictated by principle ; and depended on the passions of the Emperor. The sentence was soon revoked, the exiles were recalled, Arius himself was treated with the respect due to an innocent and injured man, and his faith was approved by the Synod of Jerusalem. The Arians every where were favoured ; and to adopt the remarkable language of the historian, "the eunuchs and slaves diffused the spiritual poison through the palace." Nor did the Western Church escape from the infection. In the Council of Rimini, the Latin bishops "suffered the palladium of the faith to be extorted from their hands by fraud and importunity ;" and according to St. Jerome, "the world was surprised to find itself Arian." A striking comment this on the 16th verse, "The earth helped the woman,

and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."

From the testimony of the writers of that age, it is evident that the Church (the symbolical woman) had fled. Hilary of Poitiers says, speaking of the state of religion at that time, "There are as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us; tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin." Basil of Cæsarea deplotes the condition of the Church, and looks back with regret to the days of persecution: then, he says, "Christians maintained peace among each other, of which at present not a single vestige remains." Similar passages abound in the writings of the Fathers of that period, especially in those of St. Salvian. "The faithful, the poor, and the humble," he says, "had fled to the Barbarians beyond the Roman frontiers, or had secreted themselves in Alpine solitudes." The outward form of Christianity still was seen, adorned with all the pomp and show of worldly magnificence; but the living spirit had departed. Splendid temples were erected in every city; but the true worshippers frequented them not. And the orthodox Athanasius expresses his apprehension that the restless activity of the clergy, "who wandered round the empire in search of the true faith, would excite the contempt and laughter of the unbelieving world."

"The woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days." This is precisely the same period, and refers to the same condition of the true Church, which is prefigured in the eleventh chapter, under the symbol of the two Witnesses. In previous Lectures, the history of that period has been elucidated at some length. The 1260 years was shewn to have commenced as early as the year 328, when Arianism obtained imperial favour, and the seat of Government was removed to Constantinople—and that the same period terminated in 1588 by the defeat of the Spanish Armada, when the Protestant faith was placed in a state of security and honour.

The *flight* of the woman is twice mentioned in this chapter, but both passages clearly point to one event. Both denote an escape from the wrath of the Dragon—both refer to the obscurity and yet security of the true Church, against which, Jesus hath said, “the gates of hell shall not prevail.” “The two wings of the great eagle,” which were given to assist her flight, are, by some commentators supposed to refer to the emperor Constantine, and the epithet “great” is very significant when applied to him;—for he united in his own person the whole authority of the empire, which for many years previously had been divided between two or more rulers. The figure has also been applied to Theodosius the Great: he favoured Christianity, and gave the death-blow to expiring Paganism. In his days, however, there was no flood threatening to submerge the Church.

But I doubt much whether the “wings of the great eagle” refer to any temporal power. Neither Constantine nor Theodosius materially helped the Church—certainly not to flee into the wilderness, which is the avowed object of the symbolical wings. But the same figure occurs elsewhere. In Exodus xix. 4, the Lord says, “Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagle’s wings, and brought you unto myself.” So also in Deuteronomy (xxxii. 11), similar language is employed. And in Isaiah (xl. 31), the same help from God is promised to individual believers. Can we then hesitate in ascribing to the same Almighty helper, the deliverance which his faithful people experienced when constrained to flee from the flood of Arianism, and other heresies which overspread Christendom in the days of Constantine? Like as on eagle’s wings they were borne aloft beyond the reach of man. As an eagle soars higher than the eye can see, so the true Church was carried where human perception could not trace it. As the eagle delights in lofty solitudes, so it was that the Waldensian Church, the Woman of the Apocalypse, was found after many days in the secluded valleys of the Alpine hills. Like the Israelites, the faithful were delivered by the mighty power, though not by the outstretched arm of God—quietly they took their departure from the

spiritual Egypt, and were also, like the Israelites in the wilderness, "nourished" with the bread which came down from heaven,— "the bread of life." So that they retained their spiritual vigour unimpaired, and their holiness of life remained unimpeached, their enemies themselves being their judges.

The escape of the Woman increased the wrath of the Dragon, and he "went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Vain is every attempt to overthrow the Church; but Satan makes unceasing efforts to harass and depress her. The war which he now began to wage, has occupied our attention in former Lectures, and will be referred to again. In the meantime let us remember that every individual believer is exposed to his rage, and experiences the truth of St. Paul's declaration, "We wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places." But thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"God is our refuge in distress,

A present help in time of need;

Our shield, our strength, and hiding-place,

Our hope and trust, a Friend indeed.

Behold the Enemy,

O how enrag'd is he!

Much cunning and great might,

Most dreadful make his spite;

On earth his equal is not found.

Man's boasted strength is weakness here,

His reason's powers oppose in vain;

But one to save us shall appear,

By whom the victory we gain.

And dost thou ask his name?

'Tis Jesus Christ, the same

Known Lord of Hosts to be,

There is no God but He!

And by His blood we overcome.

Yea, if the world with devils swarn'd,
In fiery ranks and fierce array,
We fear them not; by faith we're arm'd;
With Christ we're sure to win the day:
Thus Satan we defy,
Nor dread his tyranny;
The great Accuser's cast,
The tempter's power is past:
One word of Christ can lay him low."

LECTURE XIII.

THE BEAST FROM THE SEA.—WRETCHED CONDITION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE: ITS REVIVAL UNDER GREGORY THE GREAT.—THE TWO-HORNED LAMB-LIKE BEAST.—ORIGIN, POWER, AND DURATION OF THE PAPACY.—THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST.—CORONATION OF CHARLEMAGNE BY POPE LEO III.—HIS EMPIRE RESEMBLED THE OLD ROMAN —BUT SUBJECT TO THE POPES.—REVELATION XIII.

“AND I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that

leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."—(xiii.)

This chapter has been said by many to be the most difficult in the Book of Revelation. Certainly there is no chapter concerning the meaning of which commentators have differed more widely, or given more singular, diverse, and contradictory opinions. Some, especially Roman Catholic writers, have supposed the Beast with seven heads and ten horns, to signify Pagan Rome, while the majority of Protestant authors refer it to Papal Christendom. The wounded head has been imagined by one to mean Julius Cæsar, by another the Emperor Nero, a third has asserted that it means the Pope, who received a deadly wound by the sword of the Spirit from the hands of Luther, while a fourth has found the antitype of the wounded head in Napoleon Buonaparte. The numbering of the seven heads has also given rise to much unsatisfactory discussion—

scarcely two commentators agreeing on the seven different forms of government in the Roman empire, which the heads are supposed to indicate.

Concerning the Lamb-like Beast, opinions have also widely differed; some writers maintaining that it means a civil power, while others hold that it signifies a religious body. But the most unsatisfactory views exist concerning the Image of the Beast:—One refers it to a statue erected in honour of the Emperor Nero; another supposes it may signify the establishment of the Inquisition; while a third confidently maintains that it refers to the Council of Trent.

We may perceive that in these various interpretations, little or no attention is paid to the chronological arrangement of the visions. The order of time is violated, and the natural sequence of events disregarded. One finds his historical fulfilment of the vision in the first century; another in the seventh; while others confidently refer to the fifteenth; and some to the age in which we now live.

But to those who have studied History in the light of Revelation, there is little difficulty in assigning to each vision its proper place in the chronology of the world. And we have already seen, while tracing the fulfilment of the predictions indicated in the opening of the Seals, and in the sounding of the Trumpets, with what order and exactitude the Spirit of Truth has symbolized the leading events which are recorded in sacred and profane history, from the days of St. John to the period of the great Reformation.

The series of visions which are described from the 12th to the 16th chapter, are not so strictly chronological, as they are *supplemental* to the previous pictorial history. Still they are progressive in their prefiguration—there is no indication of irregularity, much less of transposition; and if in some passages we are unable to assign the true meaning, we may rest assured that it arises from our own ignorance, or want of perception, not from any confusion in their arrangement by the Spirit of God.

In the former chapter (the 12th) the Roman empire, in its Pagan state, was exhibited as animated by Satan, to attempt the extermination of Christianity. The symbols employed are, the Woman

clothed with the sun on the one side, and the great red Dragon on the other. The Dragon is cast down—but still perseveres in his persecution of the Woman:—She escapes into the wilderness—and then the Dragon in his wrath goes “to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

In the chapter we have just read, we (1) see how the Dragon (or Satan) began to make preparation for this war with the saints:—(2) the various devices and agents he employs for their overthrow are set before us;—(3) the *success* with which his efforts are attended;—(4) the *time* during which his power is to be exercised;—and (5) various signs and marks are also given by which he may be traced in his agency, from the beginning to the end of his persecuting career.

John, in vision, stands upon the sand of the sea, and sees a Beast rise up out of the sea. Some commentators have suggested that we should read “He stood,” instead of “I stood” upon the sand of the sea—as if John saw the Dragon standing on the sea-shore, not that he himself was there standing; but there is no sufficient reason for a departure from the authorized text; and St. John repeatedly in the chapter speaks as if present, beholding the things which he describes. He was present in the vision, as the representative of the Church on earth: and the Church, as we learn, both from history and prophecy, had fled out of the Roman empire, had left the spiritual Egypt, and had taken refuge in the wilderness. She stood on “the sand of the sea,” in a place of security, whence she could behold the nations of the earth struggling for the mastery, and agitated with every baneful passion, like the ocean tossed by a tempest.

A distinguished commentator (Elliott) has endeavoured to identify this “*sea*” with the “*flood*” which “the Dragon cast out of his mouth after the woman:” but there is no similarity in the symbols, or the words used to express them—in the one case, ὕδωρ ποταμός signifies water, like a river overflowing its banks—in the other, θάλασσα means the sea in a state of agitation. The *flood*

from the Dragon's mouth was a significant and appropriate figure, as we have shewn, of that torrent of Arianism and superstition which overspread the Church in the fourth century: but the *sea* here spoken of, is an equally significant symbol of the tumult of the nations, when the Roman empire was broken up, and its very existence threatened by the barbarous Goths and Vandals. Nor need we hesitate in applying the term *sea*, to nations or people. For the angel tells St. John, in the 17th chapter, "the waters which thou sawest, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues:" this is spoken of the spiritual Babylon: and of the literal Babylon, Jeremiah says, "O thou that dwellest upon many waters;" meaning, that 'rulest over many nations.'

The same symbol is used in the prophecies of Daniel (vii. 2), "He saw in a vision by night, and behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea. And four great Beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from the other." These are declared to be the four great kingdoms or empires which should arise from among the nations of the earth. And the fourth Beast of Daniel has such a close resemblance to the Beast out of the sea in the Apocalypse, that few commentators have failed in identifying the one with the other. We shall have occasion hereafter to compare the various points of similitude. It is undoubtedly also the same Beast,—that is, signifies the same Empire,—which in the 12th chapter is represented as a Dragon—having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. But there is one remarkable difference—the Beast out of the sea, has "ten crowns on his horns, and on his heads the names of blasphemy:"—shewing that a mighty change had been effected in the Empire, during the interval that had elapsed between the period indicated in the former vision, and the period to which this refers. It is the same Beast, but under different aspects. *Then*, under Diocletian, the Empire was pagan, powerful, and united—its head *ruled* throughout the whole congeries of nations of which it was composed. *Now*, we see it changed in religion, weak and disorganized—each chief of a tribe claiming authority, and each petty kingdom asserting its in-

dependence. The *horns* are *crowned*, not the *heads*! The nations are powerful, but not the empire—that, as denoted by the head, is *wounded to death*.

The Roman world had been devastated by successive hordes of barbarians;* but the Lombard invasion under Alboin completed its overthrow, about the year 570. "At the head of a countless army of rapacious and sanguinary barbarians, he swept with irresistible fury over the helpless land, and devastated it by fire and sword." "The Romans beheld from the walls of their fortified places, the flames of their houses, and heard the lamentations of their brethren, who were coupled together like dogs, and dragged away into distant slavery beyond the sea and the mountains." Rome, says Gibbon, "had reached, about the close of the sixth century, the lowest period of her depression." "It was behind the chair of St. Peter," writes Dr. Miley, the historian of the Papal States, "that the remnant of the senate and the people sought protection in the last extremities of their distress." It was, in fact, by the Pope that the germ of life was preserved from extinction, and the bonds of society kept from dissolution. "Like Thebes, or Babylon, or Carthage," says Gibbon, "the name of Rome might have been erased from the earth, if the city had not been animated by a vital principle, which again restored her to honour and dominion." "It would not be possible to imagine anything more wretched and utterly hopeless than the condition of Rome and Italy, at the juncture when

* In the year 547, the Goths ravaged Italy and obtained possession of Rome. Totila, their king, says Procopius, "threatened to reduce the place where Rome had stood to the condition of a sheep walk, or of a pasture for cattle." And in the account of the same event, in the chronicle of Marcellinus, we read, that "Every thing which had belonged to the Romans, Totila seized as spoil, and the Romans themselves he led away as captives. After this devastation, Rome was so desolate, that, for forty days and upwards, there was not to be seen in it one single inhabitant, but only herds of cattle and wild beasts."—*Gibbon*, chap. xliii., and *Miley's History of Papal States*, i. 350.

Gregory the Great undertook the labours and solicitude of the Pontificate."

This was the Pontiff by whom the work of restoration was begun, and he himself gave a brief but emphatic illustration of the condition of "the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live," when he exclaimed in one of his letters, "The *sword* has reached the very soul!" Of this great and energetic Pope, Gibbon thus writes: "He presumed to save his country without the consent of the Emperor or the Exarch. The sword of the enemy was suspended over Rome; it was *averted* by the mild eloquence and seasonable gifts of the Pontiff, who commanded the respect of heretics and barbarians."

Life was thus preserved in the beast by Gregory and his successors, from the time that the Exarchs, (or governors) overpowered, despised, or driven away, ceased to exercise authority in Rome or in Italy. For two hundred years, the Popes maintained an almost constant struggle with the Lombards, who often vainly attempted to get possession of the city of Rome. But it was not merely the power of the Popes as sovereigns in the city, but the opinion entertained of their sanctity and spiritual headship, which kept up the remembrance, and prevented the extinction of the Roman empire. A writer in the middle ages remarks: "the empire having been overthrown, it revived in the Pontificate as with a second birth—in magnitude not indeed equal to the old empire, but in its form not very dissimilar; because all nations, from East and from West, venerate the Pope not otherwise than they before obeyed the Emperors."* From the time of Gregory, about the end of the

* In a similar spirit, Dr. Miley, writing in the year 1849, points unconsciously to the Image of the Beast, and to the power of the Dragon-lamb which gave it life:—"Not more strictly related are *shadow* and *body*, than are the two realms which in turn have wielded the sceptre on the banks of the Tiber. The Power supposed to have been founded by St. Peter, and that which was founded by Romulus cannot be comprehended, unless when studied in contrast, as acting and re-acting, the one on the other. Morally,

sixth century and onwards, Rome was visited by pilgrims from all quarters of the earth. "There," says Dr. Miley, "in the person of the Pontiff-king, surrounded by all that could most indelibly impress the imagination and the senses of the nations, such as they were then, we behold a spectacle, of all others the best calculated to create and confirm respect for authority,—which was the primary want of those turbulent, and, at best, semi-barbarous ages;"* and then he proceeds to enumerate the various nations of Europe, of Africa, and the East, who sent forth their pilgrims and students to the capital of Christendom. Truly, in those days, it was evident that the declaration in the vision was verified—"all the world wondered after the beast."

To the Beast, thus restored, was given power to continue forty and two months, and to make war with the saints; and a mouth also was given to speak great things and blasphemies. The Dragon, (or the Devil) it is said, "gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The Beast was only *his agent* to blaspheme God, and "make war with the saints." But it is very remarkable, that the Beast is declared to be as it were only an agent at second hand; for all the power given to him, was *exercised* by another: as we read in the 11th verse, "I beheld another Beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon; and ~~he~~ exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him," or in his presence. What, then, are we to understand by this second Beast? Weak, in outward appearance, as a Lamb, yet terrible and crafty as a dragon?

The ablest commentator on the Book of Revelation answers the question, by explaining the *two-horned lamb-like beast* as "the papal clergy, secular and regular, parochial and monastic, acting in support of the papal Antichrist." And the image of the Beast, he

prophetically, and most signally, in an historical light, their dramatic connection is manifest."—*History of Papal States*, vol. i. p. lxxviii.

* Miley's *History of Papal States*, i. 461.

says, signifies the Romish clergy assembled in Council. He had also previously attempted to prove, that the seven-horned Beast from the sea was Popery and the Popes: thus he makes *all* the Beasts to signify *POPERY*, in its head and members,—all meaning the same thing!

But this is surely inconsistent with the usual methods of symbolizing future events, which it has pleased the Spirit of Truth to adopt. Neither is there any instance in Scripture, of a spiritual or ecclesiastical community exhibited under a bestial figure. The spiritual power acts on the mind, not on the body; it influences the opinion; it binds the conscience; it affects the heart; and is symbolized by an eye, a mouth, or by human intelligence. But the temporal power, or earthly state, is usually denoted by a mere *animal* form,—as is especially manifest by the explanations given by the angel to St. John in the 17th chapter of the Apocalypse, and also by the angel to Daniel—"the fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom."

We are, therefore, bound to consider the two-horned *lamb-like beast* also, as a temporal power,—as a kingdom upon earth,—but of a peculiar nature; as weak among the other kingdoms of the world, as is a lamb among the beasts of the field,—as being contemptible in power, but very formidable in policy; for he speaks as a dragon—exercises all the power of the first beast before him, doing great wonders, and deceiving them that dwell on the earth.

And what more significant and intelligible language could have been used to describe the Papal states—the patrimony of St. Peter—the Pope as a temporal prince—to set forth his small *temporal*, and mighty *spiritual* dominion? Like a lamb, calling himself, in affected humility, "Servant of the servants of God," and the vicerent of Christ the Lamb of God upon earth. But as a Dragon deceiving and terrifying the nations. As if the Devil had actually transferred to the Pope all the power and influence he formerly exercised among the nations,—ruling and swaying the destinies of the world.

In remarkable accordance with the rise of the Papal power, is

the vision seen by St. John: "He beheld the beast coming up out of the earth;" that is, silently and imperceptibly, like the growth of a plant, unlike the former seven-headed beast, emerging from a stormy sea, with noise and tumult. Gibbon, speaking of the Popes, says, "their temporal power insensibly arose from the calamities of the times." But the Papal historian traces the origin of their sovereign power to the catacombs themselves, where Christianity found a hiding-place from the storms of Pagan persecution. There, he says, was "its germ planted, there were the roots and fibres from which it grew."* "It was not, however, till the pontificate of Pope Gregory the Great, that the Pontiff and the Prince began to appear conspicuously in the same individual; for it was at that period precisely, (590 to 604) that Rome and Italy in general had arrived at the crisis of utter abandonment and misery."† These misfortunes involved the Pope in the business of peace and war; he sends governors to the towns and cities; issues orders to the generals; relieves the public distress; treats of peace, and of the ransom of captives from the enemy. "Gregory might justly be styled the father of his country;" "and in the attachment of a grateful people," says Gibbon, "he found the purest reward of a citizen, and the best right of a sovereign."

This sovereignty commenced in the year 604, and has continued to the present day;—and with scarcely any increase or diminution of temporal power or extent of jurisdiction. The Duchy of Rome, and the Exarchate of Ravenna, (the two horns of the Lamb) usually called the Patrimony of St. Peter, or the Papal States, have comprised the territories of the Popes for above a thousand years. And these territories were not acquired by force of arms, but were gradually obtained by voluntary cession or gift; and formally confirmed to the Popes by Charlemagne on his conquest of Italy, in the year 774. As a temporal Sovereign, the power of the Pope has ever been contemptible; and yet for 1,200 years his influence has been felt and acknowledged by every Potentate in Europe. "*He*

* "The Catacombs were the first city of the Popes."—*Miley*, i. 353.

† *Miley*, i. 205.

exerciseth all the powers of the first Beast before him:"—that is, the power which had been given by the Dragon to the seven-headed Beast, or revived Western Empire, was wielded according to the will of the Pope,—and history clearly shews this to have been the case. In his *ecclesiastical* character, as head of the Church, "he spake as a Dragon," deceiving them that dwell on the earth, by his pretended miracles; and by his bulls and decrees, subjugating their conscience, and enforcing obedience to his behests, under the most awful spiritual threatenings. *He* thereby had power to raise up and to pull down among the kings of the earth, as several found to their cost; and at his pleasure he changed times and seasons,—usurping the place of God upon earth, and speaking blasphemies in his name.

"In the middle ages (says Dr. Miley,) whether rightly or wrongly, the fact was this, that the king of the realm in question (i. e. the Pope as sovereign of the Papal States,) was as decidedly at the head of the confederated States called Christendom, as is the American President at the head of the United States of North America at the present day." (vol. i. p. lxix.)

And Napoleon Buonaparte, while in the zenith of his power, gave his estimate of the weight of the Pope in the affairs of Europe when he wrote to his Ambassador,—to "treat with the Pope as if he were at the head of 200,000 troops." He doubtless recollected, that though the Patrimony of St. Peter was but a paltry province, yet the Pope was recognized as *their Head* by a hundred and fifty millions of Roman Catholics.

But the Pope especially exercised his power as head over the kingdoms of the earth, when he urged them to "war against the Saints;" proclaiming anathema to those who refused, and granting indulgences to those who joined in those sanguinary persecutions;—and thus he made use of the strength of the ten-horned Beast to overcome those "which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus." For this purpose chiefly, the Almighty has permitted his establishment and continuance on earth, and here is "the patience and the faith of the Saints." It is, indeed, one of those mysterious

circumstances in God's providential dealings with his Church, which it requires faith to recognize, as under the control of our gracious Saviour, who *alone* has all power in heaven and earth;—and the perfect work of patience, is also required to wait in stillness and expectation for that “day of the Lord,” when this “mystery of iniquity shall be revealed,” and the Man of Sin be destroyed “with the spirit of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming.”

But another remarkable instance is given, of the power of this Lamb-like Beast. It was said, that he caused an “*image* to be made to the Beast which had the deadly wound by the sword,” and that he gave “life to the image.”

I have already stated, that many conjectures on the meaning of this image, have been given to the world. Elliott says, it is the General Councils, called by the Pope; some think the Inquisition, and Bishop Newton maintains that it signifies the Pope himself:—while others candidly acknowledge the extreme difficulty of the passage; and one distinguished writer asserts, that he who can explain the meaning of the “image of the Beast,” has got the key to the greatest mysteries in the Book of Revelation.

The word **IMAGE** signifies *likeness* or *resemblance*, as well as *corporeal representation*; and is frequently used in this sense in the Apostolic writings. In the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians, Christ is called “the image of God;” and a believer is said to be “renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created Him”—and having “borne the image of the earthly man, he now bears the image of the heavenly.” But this image may exist without life, for St. Paul speaks of some “who have the form of godliness without the power.”

In like manner we should understand this image to the beast not as a statue, or corporeal representation made in its honour, but as a likeness or resemblance *impressed* upon it:—and that not as a mere *form* or outward show, but as a *living power*;—this form or image was given to the wounded beast, by the “dwellers on the earth,” at the instigation of the Dragon-speaking Lamb; and he then imparted to it life, and speech, and authority. A great and

permanent change was thus effected in the appearance of the Beast. For it was not the creation of a second Beast like to the first. We nowhere read of the *image* as distinct from the Beast—it is indeed afterwards mentioned, but only as a characteristic or something attaching to the Beast, as in the 15th chapter, where “victory over the Beast,” is also victory “over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.”

We are therefore led to inquire, when, and in what manner, this change took place in the body of the wounded Beast? And remembering the chronological arrangement of the visions, it is evident that this must have occurred after the Lamb-like Beast came up out of the earth, and had obtained power and authority. This latter event we have seen took place in the year 604, and in tracing the history of Europe and of Popery onward from that date, we can hardly fail to observe the process, and mark the result, of a singular change that was effected among the nations of Christendom.

The History of the Papal States by Dr. Miley, throws more light on the events of that period, than Gibbon's Decline and Fall, and proves most clearly, though unconsciously to the author himself, the Antichristian character of his own Church; and also, that it was absolutely necessary some supreme power should be formed for the safety of the Church, and for the preservation of the little civilization that was left in Europe, after the dreadful havoc made by Goth, Saracen, and Lombard. The Popes therefore supported the pretensions and advanced the power of the grandfather and father of Charlemagne in the Frankish Court; and the Popish agents were at work throughout every nation in Europe, having the same object in view. Repeatedly was the Pope obliged to call on the Franks for help against the terrible Lombards. It was therefore as much a work of necessity as of policy to consolidate and sanction the conquests which Charlemagne had achieved;—and as the Pope even in those barbarous times was venerated by all the European nations as the Head of the Church and St. Peter's successor, and his capital was visited by Kings and Princes from the remotest tribes—it is evident that his authority would be little

short of *Divine*, and his elevation of the Frankish King to the temporal Headship of the *Holy Roman Empire*, hailed throughout bleeding Europe, as an act which none could or would dare to resist—an act, sanctioned by every principle of policy, of humanity, and of religion.

Charlemagne was crowned by Pope Leo III. at the Festival of Christmas, in the year 800. "This stroke of policy," says the Papal historian, "*acted like magic* on the aspect of the Barbaric-Romanze nations, and permanently shaped the after-destinies of the Western world."* At this important coronation, "the faithful were arranged in order, and it may be fairly said, that there was no tribe or nation, but had a representative present at, and assisting in, the Divine offices, which the choirs in their place, and the clergy in the Presbyterion were chanting."

"There was a pause in the heavenly melody, as the Pontiff rose from his throne; and, as he moved to the altar, and thence lifted with his own hands a most precious diadem, all eyes were turned on the greatest of Christian kings and conquerors, bowed in his orisons before the shrine. The successor of St. Peter places the refulgent crown of empire on the head of Charlemagne, with words of acclamation, which being caught up in the first place by the clergy and the choirs, and then by the multitudes of the faithful, of all orders, *and of every nation*, the lackered roofs of the Basilica are made again and again to re-echo with the words, 'Long life, and victory to Carolus, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God, the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans.'"† "This," continues Dr. Miley, "*was the work of the Pope alone*. The idea of placing on the brow of Charlemagne, the crown of Augustus, originated with Leo III., and the execution was not less peculiarly his own, than was the conception of the design. The coronation came on Charlemagne by surprise. After it was over, he was heard to declare, that had he known of the Pope's intention, great as was the festival, he would not have gone that day to St Peter's."‡ All

* Miley, ii. 9.

† Ibid, ii. 11, 12.

‡ Ibid, ii. 25.

this is a striking illustration of the vision, and of the power of the Lamb-like Beast, speaking with authority to "the dwellers on the earth," that they should make an *image* to the wounded Beast,—that is, a likeness or resemblance of the old Roman Empire,—and he himself in their presence endowing it with life. There is no other event in the whole course of history, to which the symbol of the *image* can with propriety be applied.

Speaking of the *Church* and the *world*, as both being now *Christian*, Dr. Miley says, (and he speaks the language of every Papist,) "Both have their separate spheres, their peculiar allotted functions, just as we have *soul* and *body*, in the person of man. But the honour of precedency, the directive faculty, is assigned—in this harmonizing of the two powers—to the *Popes*!—hence it was, that the anointing of Charlemagne, ratified the *consecration of Europe* (in its head) to the honour and service of the Cross!—rendering the Emperor subordinate to the Pope, and bound to do him homage: and throughout the middle ages, the Empire was popularly regarded as a *benefice* in the gift of the Popes,—as a fief of the Apostolic see. It is certain that the Popes transferred from dynasty to dynasty, and from one prince to another, the Imperial dignity, which they conceived it was theirs alone to create:—nor can it be denied, that from the age of Charlemagne, to the coronation of Charles V. —(the last who received the Imperial crown from the Pope,)—the Pontiffs were at the *head* as well of the political as of the ecclesiastical system of Europe."* And it was thus, as I shall afterwards have occasion to shew, that the world (as predicted in the vision) worshipped the Dragon, and worshipped the Beast, by the homage and obedience that was rendered to the Pope.

The transforming effects produced by the coronation of Charlemagne, have been compared to a *stroke of enchantment* in shaping the political destinies of the Christian nations. "The moment before the Pope set the diadem upon his head, (says Miley,) the stability of the system which Charlemagne had founded, depended

* Miley, ii. 24—27.

exclusively and totally upon the life and genius of one man, and that man, after a life of fifty-three campaigns, rapidly sinking into old age. But no sooner was the acclamation of the Pope heard by the myriads in St. Peter's—no sooner was it re-echoed by the foremost men of the age, than the whole position of affairs in the West was changed. The social world, which hung but a moment before, suspended over the abyss of irretrievable anarchy, was suddenly shifted on a new and imperishable basis.* The *image* of the Beast was thus formed. It had life, and stability, and power, to command obedience. Still it was *but the image* of the old Imperial Beast with the seven crowned heads.

"The day dream, the darling project of Charlemagne," says Guizot, "was the resurrection of the Roman empire." Though it had been crushed to the earth, mutilated, and dismembered, yet the *image of its greatness* was often and vividly revived before the excited imagination of the ferocious conquerors; and in the contemplation of this *image*, their understandings were struck with the glaring defects and inferiority of their own social condition. Hence the effect of that stroke of policy which revived the empire of the West. The long-forgotten political system of the old Roman empire, once more arose into fresh remembrance and life. The barbarians could not create, but they could copy; and there was the model before them of a government different from that of the church or the camp, yet capable of harmonizing with both. "The copy fell immeasurably short of the original, it is true; but the Barbaric-Romanze empire of Charlemagne, had as much of Roman material in it, (as strikingly obvious a relation to the empire of Augustus), as had his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, to the structure which, in the time of Virgil, was seated in golden splendour on the Palatine." Even the officers of his court were named in accordance with the Roman model. "Thus," says Miley, "the grand and darling project of the Pontiffs, of not only making the world Christian, but also *Roman*, was crowned with complete success."†

* Miley, ii. 29.

† Ibid, ii. 38—41.

I know not what further testimony can be required to prove that the empire of Charlemagne (the German or *Latin empire* as it was called) is "the image of the Beast," and that it was also a revival of the Beast which "was wounded to death," whose "deadly wound was *thus* healed," and "all the world wondered after it." And that all this was effected by the cunning policy, and by the exercise of that power which was conferred upon the Beast "with two horns like a Lamb, and which spake as a Dragon:"—that is, by the Papacy, acting through the Pope as its head.

This conclusion has been drawn, chiefly from the researches of Dr. Miley—himself a Papist and a Priest—but who, like Gibbon, has proved an able but unconscious commentator on some of the darkest pages of prophecy. He has also laboured to shew the superiority of the Pope to the Emperor even as a *temporal* prince:—asserting that the Imperial crown was derived from *him*:—that the Emperor was his vassal, and bound to hold the Pope's stirrup when he mounted—that the great end and aim in the creation of the Empire was to uphold the Pope, and maintain the Church against all its adversaries; which Charlemagne and his successors at their coronation swore to perform.

Hence their obedience to the Pope's behests in fulminating sanguinary decrees against heretics; in "making war with the saints," and acting, on all occasions, as the executioners of his will. The Emperor occasionally demurred, but the terrible and dragon-like power of the Pope soon taught him, that safety was only to be attained by abject submission. It is thus again we see the force and propriety of the expression (as applied to the Pope), "*He exerciseth all the power of the first Beast before him* (or in his presence), and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast."

For the people only obeyed the Emperor *that was recognised* by the Pope. An excommunicated Emperor soon found, that the Bishop of Rome had power to dissolve all the bonds of allegiance between a prince and his subjects:—For "*he deceived them that dwelt on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.*"

What those *miracles* were—what the *number* and the *mark* of the Beast, his *heads* and his *horns*—what the duration of his power—his *identity* with the fourth Beast of Daniel, and St. Paul's Man of Sin—and the resemblance of Popery to Paganism, as the image of the Beast, in its religious aspect—must form subjects of consideration for subsequent Lectures.

“Guard us, Lord, from Satan’s wiles,
Safe from dangers, free from fears,
May we live upon thy smiles,
Till the promis’d hour appears,
When the sons of God shall prove
All their Father’s boundless love.”

LECTURE XIV.

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST.—ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECT.—THE MARK OF THE BEAST.—ITS NAME.—ITS NUMBER.—THE LATIN EMPIRE.—THE PAPACY.—DANIEL'S LITTLE HORN.—THE MOUTH OF THE BEAST.—DURATION OF ITS POWER.—DECEIT AND BLASPHEMY.—LYING WONDERS.—THE SYSTEM OF POPERY.—REVELATION XIII.

IN the last Lecture, on the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation, I attempted to prove that the seven-headed and ten-horned Beast seen by St. John, symbolized the Roman empire, as it appears in history during the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, when it was wounded to death (as an empire) by the sword of the Barbarians.

It was also shewn, that the two-horned Lamb-like Beast, signifies the temporal power of the Popes, or the Papal States, which corresponds also with the "little horn" seen by Daniel among the ten horns of the fourth Beast. Both are described as feeble in power, but strong in policy, and wielding all the energies of the mighty empire with which they are connected.

The *Image of the Beast* we considered, as prefiguring that change which took place among the nations of Europe, when Charlemagne had subjugated and bound them together in his iron grasp; and the Pope, by crowning him as Roman Emperor, gave the sanction of religion to his conquests, and surrounded his throne with the hedge of divinity. It was thus the image, or resemblance of the old Roman empire was revived, and its likeness stamped on the kingdoms of the West.

But the "Image of the Beast" consisted not merely in an exterior or bodily resemblance of the old Roman empire; there was also

an interior or spiritual likeness. That is, the religion of Charlemagne's newly created empire, bore a striking likeness to that of the old Pagan. The Christianity of the eighth century was changed in all but in name. The proofs of this are abundant. In Middleton's *Letter from Rome*, in Du Pré's *Ancient and Modern Ceremonies*, and various other works, the resemblance of Popery to Paganism is minutely traced. The Pope himself bears the name of the old Roman Chief Priest—*Pontifex Maximus*! * The ancient statue of Jupiter is worshipped as St. Peter; and the Virgin Mary receives the adoration formerly paid to Diana, to Venus, and to Juno. The Vestal Virgins are now represented by the Nuns; and the college of Cardinals had their counterpart in the grand sacerdotal college which formed the Council of the Pagan Pontiff. The Pope and his Consistory claim the power of canonizing the saints, and commanding them to be worshipped, just as the senate of Rome had the privilege of raising their fellow mortals to the rank of gods, and decreeing to them divine honours:—and all the lustrations, the incensings, the exorcisms, and the processions of Popery are faithfully copied from the Pagan ritual.†

Roman Catholic writers, in magnifying the triumph of Christianity over Paganism, seem to be unconscious that her benignant features had been gradually and silently (like a dissolving view) changed

* "In their very priesthood," says Dr. Middleton, "they have contrived, one would think, to keep up as near a resemblance as they could to that of Pagan Rome; and the Sovereign Pontiff, instead of deriving his succession from St. Peter (who, if he ever was at Rome, did not reside there, at least in any worldly pomp or splendour), may with more reason, and a much better plea, style himself the successor of the *Pontifex Maximus*, or Chief Priest of old Rome; whose authority and dignity was the greatest in the Republic; and who was looked upon as the arbiter and judge of all things, civil as well as sacred, human as well as divine; whose power, established almost with the foundation of the city, 'was an omen,' says Polydore Virgil, 'and sure presage of that priestly majesty, by which Rome was once again to reign as universally, as it had done before by the force of its arms.'"

† See Note at end of Lecture.

into the expression of the monster she had destroyed. But it was this gross caricature, this grotesque Christianity, that became the religion of the empire, and was enforced by the power of the sword.

Thus was the image of the Beast perpetuated, inwardly and outwardly, in religion as well as in polity. And no other form of Christianity was permitted or tolerated in the empire. The Emperors indeed swore, at their coronation, to maintain the Church (that is Popery) in all its integrity; and the Popes, directing the energies of the empire at their will, "exercising all the power of the first Beast," caused that as many as would not worship the image of the Beast, in its religious likeness, "should be killed." How awfully and how literally this has been fulfilled, I need not here attempt to prove: it has already been referred to when speaking of the death of the two witnesses: and history has written, with an iron pen, the sufferings of millions of the saints, whose blood, like Abel's, has cried to heaven against the Beast like a Lamb, but "who spake" and acted "as a Dragon."

It is further added, "He caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a *mark* in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." (Rev. xiii. 16, 17.)

It is a well known fact, that among the laws enacted against so-called heretics, were several forbidding all intercourse in the way of "buying and selling:" to do so was accounted a crime, and visited with severe punishment. William the Conqueror would not permit any to *buy or sell*, who were found disobedient to the Apostolic See.

The mark referred to in this passage, was, in the days of St. John, and long after, commonly imprinted on slaves, soldiers, and devotees of one or another God. Roman slaves had their master's name or mark on their forehead; and the soldiers had the Emperor's mark on their hand. Among devotees, those of the god Bacchus are specified as branding themselves with the ivy leaf; and even at this day, Hindoos are marked on the forehead with the hieroglyph of their god.

The mark of the Beast, by which the distinction was made manifest, was doubtless the *idolatry*, the worship of the saints and the cross, by which the Papists were then, as now, distinguished; this idolatry denoting their attachment and subjection to the Papal system. The true servants of God have also a mark, as we find in the next chapter, but it is the "Father's name written in their foreheads." So in Ezekiel (ix. 4), a distinction is made between those who had abandoned themselves to idolatry, and those who retained faith and obedience to Jehovah: a mark is set "upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst of Jerusalem." And such has been the case ever since Popery reared its head in the midst of Christendom. The worship of St. Peter and the fear of his wrath were the grand doctrines inculcated by the early Popes,—and implicit obedience to his See has ever been the mark of a true son of the Church.

In the worship of saints and images, we recognise the worship of the Dragon (or of Satan) himself. His great object has ever been to "change the truth of God into a lie," and to induce men "to worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator." Thus he tempted the Israelites to make a calf in Horeb, as a representation of the God which had brought them out of the land of Egypt: so also Jeroboam made Israel to sin by the same object of idolatry. In both cases the design was not to substitute another god in the place of Jehovah, but to help the devotion of the worshipper by a sensible representation or corporeal image.* But the Lord denounced it, as "corruption and a great sin," and commanded that no image or the likeness of any thing should be made for man to bow down to, or serve. Idolatry, however, overspread the earth: Satan deceived all nations—and hence he is called by an inspired Apostle "the god of this world." He even tempted our Lord himself to idolatry, offering to him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, if he would fall down and worship him. Our Saviour's reply condemns alike the Papist and the Pagan,

* See also 2 Kings xvii.

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him *only* shalt thou serve."

Idolatry then was the great mark which distinguished those who were "deceived by the Beast" from those "who kept the commandments of God and had the testimony of Jesus." The one worshipped God in spirit and in truth—the other worshipped the images of saints as mediators with God. Wherever Popery spread, this was its accompanying mark; and we find, even in the sixth century, the ancient British Christians complaining, that Augustine and his monks * "corrupted the true religion of Christ with superstition, images and idolatry."

But in the vision before us, a distinction is noticed regarding this mark—it might be in their *right hand*, or in their *forehead*.† Those having it in the forehead, are doubtless the earnest and superstitious devotees of image-worship, or of the Papacy: those with the mark in the right hand may mean the crusaders, or zealous performers of penance, or of pilgrimages to the holy shrines, who think by the help of their own works to merit salvation; or more probably it may signify those who have no reverence whatever for the saints, yet outwardly and publicly pay them adoration. Of such, Niebuhr the historian says, (speaking even of the priesthood) "They are only ecclesiastics by profession, for I have not found in them the slightest trace of a belief in the dogmas of Catholicity; they detest fanaticism, yet act with systematic bigotry, combining cold worldly formalism with harsh intolerant measures." These are the Romish priests of the present day.

But beside these, another class is referred to in the vision, who are not proscribed by the persecuting Lamb-like Dragon:—those who, not having the mark had yet the "name of the Beast, or the number of his name."

* Sent by Pope Gregory the Great to convert the Saxons in England.—See Phillips' "Protestantism before Luther."

† Bond-slaves and servants, in ancient times, had their master's mark in their forehead; soldiers were usually marked in the hand.

It has been suggested, that the *name* of the Beast is Paganism, and may refer to those Pagan remnants which existed in the empire long after Charlemagne's days, but who might "buy and sell" with their Popish neighbours without let or hindrance. The idolators in the forests of Sweden or Germany, did not disturb the peace of Satan's kingdom, and were therefore tolerated or endured. Though this is certainly true, yet the designation is more forcibly illustrated in the conduct of those who are only *nominally* the adherents of Popery; and never perhaps was there a greater number than in the present day. They bear the name of Roman Catholic, but have no religion whatever. One, who knew the Italians well, says, "When an Italian has once ceased to be a slave of the Church, he never seems to trouble his head about religious matters at all: among the laity you cannot discover a vestige of piety." Thousands of such nominal and careless Papists have ever existed within the pale of the Romish Church. But there were many also, I believe, who had the name of Papists, in former days, and yet were humble followers of the Lamb, trusting in him alone for salvation—yet having neither light sufficient to find their way out of the darkness by which they were surrounded, nor boldness to testify for Jesus and against Popery.

To the *number of the Beast* special attention is called in the last verse of the thirteenth chapter. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man: [or a method of numbering practised among men] and his number is six hundred threescore and six." This number has certainly tested the wisdom, and exercised the understanding of commentators from the earliest ages to the present day. It would be useless to give the various meanings which have been attached to it. The opinion of the early father Irenæus, that it signifies ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ (*Λατεινος*) seems to be the best founded, and he is followed by his disciple Hippolytus, and many of the most learned writers on prophecy. The Greek letters of that word when expressed in numbers, amount to the Ϡξς', or the number 666.

Modern commentators apply it to the Latin Church. But it has

been my object to prove that the *Image of the Beast*, to which this mysterious number is attached, signifies the Roman Empire as revived under Charlemagne, and which is usually called the *Latin Empire*, to distinguish it from the Greek. It was Latin in its literature, its religion, and its institutions: and we may almost perceive the reason why the number 666 should be interpreted *Lateinos** or the *Latin Empire*, for this image of the old Roman grew strong and powerful, while the Greek empire was waning away. St. John was writing to Greeks and in the Greek language: and in Greek numerals he designated (as was not unusual in those times, "for it is the number of a man") the name of a power that should arise, having no connection or sympathy with the Greek Church, or the Greek State; and which, when it did arise, could not fail to be recognised by all faithful Greek Christians, as that antichristian state which had been predicted by name in the Apocalypse, which would be supported and directed by another power superior to itself in energy and intellect; and that both of them were destined in the end to utter destruction. While at the same time this designation would not be so apparent to the Latins themselves, as has been evidently the case; and at the period of the Reformation, so little acquainted were the Latin priests with the Greek language, that the teaching of it was stigmatized by many as a new *heresy*.

* Λ	...	...	30
α	...	...	1
ϛ	...	...	300
ε	...	...	5
ι	...	...	10
ν	...	...	50
ο	...	...	70
ς	...	...	200
			666

"*Lateinos* with *ei* is the true orthography, (says Bishop Newton,) as the Greeks wrote the long *i* of the Latins, and as the Latins themselves wrote in former times."

That Irenæus himself applied this number to the Latin *Empire* exclusively, and not to the *Church*, is evident from his language—"Lateinos (he says) or the number 666, is the name of the last of Daniel's four kingdoms; they being *Latins* that now reign." We seem bound, therefore, to apply this number to the Image of the Beast, and to restrict the meaning of the term "Beast," in the following chapters, to those kingdoms or horns which constituted the Latin Empire, and support the Papacy, or "great whore."

But whether the number 666 be understood to signify the Latin Empire or the Latin Church, or whether both may be included in the designation, it is clear that the intention of the Spirit of God is to point out to the true Church one of the prime agents of Satan in his war against the saints.

The great moving Power, as already stated, in doing this work of the Devil, is the Lamb-like Beast, or the Papacy;—his *temporal* power, weak and contemptible, has already been considered. His *spiritual* power is characterised as Dragon-like—cunning and cruel;—terrible to all opposers; for he had a mouth like a lion, yet deceiving the nations, as he beguiled Eve in the garden of Eden. Such has been the Papacy from the beginning. The lofty and arrogant pretensions of the Pope have imposed upon the world, and none dared to question or dispute his blasphemous assumptions, especially when backed by the *miracles* which he pretended to perform. "Blaspheming God," by assuming to himself the divine authority by which laws are enforced or set aside;—blaspheming the tabernacle (or the Church), by requiring that spiritual homage and obedience which is due to God alone;—and blaspheming them that dwell in heaven, by commanding the worship of angels, and appointing prayers to the saints whom he has canonized and raised to the rank of mediators with the Almighty.

This extraordinary and wonder-working power is evidently the same which was seen by Daniel in his vision as a *little horn*, "having eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things, and a look more stout than his fellows." "The same horn," it

is added, "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them."

Horns are explained as meaning (here and elsewhere) *kings* or *kingdoms*. But this "little horn," it is said, shall be diverse from the others. The diversity of the Pope from other kings is well known, and his peculiar office, as *Bishop* or *Overseer*, is clearly pointed out in the symbol of the *EYES* as the eyes of a man; and his *mouth* shews the authority with which he promulgated his false doctrines and blasphemous decrees:—even as with the "mouth of a lion" he asserted the superiority of the spiritual over the secular powers; exhorting and commanding the kings of the earth to exterminate heretics, and all such as opposed his spiritual pretensions, and arrogantly promising the remission of sins to all who joined in such crusades.*

Diverse indeed was this horn from other kings, ruling not only over his own dominions, but over those of his neighbours—as a priest and as a king, exercising both spiritual and temporal authority. Before this horn, it is further said, in Daniel's vision, "three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots." This also was fulfilled in the history of the Papacy. For in the sixth century, the Vandals who had established their kingdom in Corsica and Sardinia, were rooted out; and soon after, the Ostrogoth kingdom in Italy was brought to an end. Both of these had been very troublesome to the Pope, though not in the same degree as the Lombards, who in the eighth century threatened the very existence of the Papacy; but this third horn was also "plucked up by the roots." Thus three horns or kingdoms were subdued before, or fell in the immediate presence of the "little horn," and were never again restored: and every let or hindrance to the development of the spiritual pretensions of the Pope was now removed out of the way.

In the vision of Daniel, the little horn is said to be *attached* to or growing out of the fourth Beast, or great kingdom that should arise on the earth; but in the Apocalypse, the Lamb-like beast is

* Fourth Lateran Council, c. 3.

described as distinct—as constituting a kingdom independent of, and yet superior to, that which is symbolized by the ten-horned beast; for “he exercises all his power.”

But yet we believe that both the little horn and the Lamb-like Beast represent the Papacy—and in this there is neither confusion nor contradiction, but a wonderful diversity of illustration, uniting in the production of one harmonious design. In Daniel's vision is exhibited the four great empires which should successively rule the greater portion of the earth—and rising out of the fourth yet belonging to it, a *power* is seen whose grand object is the destruction of the Church of God. In St. John's visions, this extraordinary power is prefigured with more distinctness: it was about to be realized on the earth, and therefore it is characterised with more exactness, and its origin and its acts are more minutely described. The picture is so vividly drawn that we cannot fail to recognise the original. For in these remarkable exhibitions by the spirit of prophecy, we clearly perceive the characteristics of a peculiar kingdom, which should possess both spiritual and temporal authority. And we now see before us, the Papacy, not only as a distinct ecclesiastical power, but as a secular sovereignty known by the title of the Papal States, and further, as being also one of the kingdoms of the ten-horned beast.

This has seldom been acknowledged by commentators. They have been more desirous of proving the Papacy to be an *eighth head* of the Beast than one of its *horns*. But, as we have seen, not only is this distinctly stated by Daniel, it may also be safely inferred from the words of St. John, in the 5th verse, where (speaking of the ten-horned Beast) he says, “there was *given* unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.” The mouth (or its power of speech) has ever been the distinguishing characteristic of the Papacy—(hence we shall afterwards find it called the “false Prophet,”)—and the mouth is also the principal feature set before us in Daniel's little horn: there it is said to have a “mouth speaking great things,” and “great words against the Most High,” and “because of the great words which the horn spake, the Beast was slain.”

So that in the vision of St. John, the word **MOUTH** is used, instead of the word *horn*, to signify that power or kingdom which was *added* to the body of the great Beast; for it ought to be specially noticed, that in both visions, this peculiar feature did not originally belong to the Beast, or grow with its growth. St. John describes the mouth as *given* to the Beast after his deadly wound was healed,—and it was while Daniel was considering the horns, that “another little horn came up among them.” I am therefore led to the conclusion, that the “little horn” in Daniel is synonymous with the “mouth” in the Apocalypse, and that the Lamb-like Beast is a fuller and more distinct symbol of the same power; all pointing to the Papacy as the only state ever existent upon earth, in which all these various and wonderful predictions have been fulfilled.

Another circumstance in the vision, referring to the Papacy, is the duration of its power. “Power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.” Similar is the declaration regarding the little horn in Daniel: “he shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time,”—or for a period of three years and a half—which is equivalent to forty-two months, or the 1260 days which, as prophetic days, have been shewn to signify 1260 years. *Here* again, we see the identity of the “mouth” in the Apocalypse with the “little horn” in Daniel—and the propriety of assigning the specified term of duration to the “mouth of the Beast,” not to the Beast itself. For indeed this latter Beast, or the Roman empire, of which it is the symbol, has existed above 2600 years, and its “body is not yet destroyed and given to the burning flame.” But the Papacy, as shewn in a former Lecture, began to exercise power as a “little horn” under Gregory I., in the year 604, and began to speak great things and blasphemies, two years after, when his successor, Boniface, assumed the title of “*Universal Bishop*,” so that the power, nay, the very existence of the Papacy will terminate, according to these predictions of Daniel and St. John, in the year 1866 at the latest! I am aware that some writers date the beginning of the 1260 years, from the decree

of the emperor Justinian, in favour of the Pope, in the year 533 :—but, as an epoch in the history of Popery, it marks no such important event or radical change, whether spiritual or secular, as those referred to in the times of Gregory and Boniface. Besides, if the 1260 years commenced with Justinian's decree, they terminated sixty years ago, in the year 1793 ; and still we find Popery not merely existing, but aggressive—not only maintaining its state and character as having two horns like a lamb, but even speaking as a Dragon, and to the present day “making war with the saints,” and “*deceiving* them that dwell on the earth.”

This latter characteristic of the Papacy is especially noticed by St. Paul, when writing to the Thessalonians concerning the Man of Sin ; “whose coming,” he says, “is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.”—(2 Thess. ii. 9, 10 ; also 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.)

Satan is called the “father of lies,” and after his craft, and at his instigation, has the Church of Rome imposed upon the world. Asserting, that to St. Peter was committed the care of the Church, with authority to rule and govern—the Pope has pretended to be his successor, and that to him *alone* belongs the right to promulgate laws or to dispense with them :—“It is a thing undoubted,” says Pope Celestine, “that the Apostle Peter received the keys and power of binding and loosing ; *which Peter still lives*, and exercises judgment in his successors.” But it cannot be proved from Scripture or history that St. Peter ever was in Rome, much less that he there exercised the office of Bishop. Yet upon this mere assumption, is founded all the authority claimed by the Popes, down to the present day :—The reigning Pope (Pius IX.) says, “The power of governing the universal Church entrusted by our Lord Jesus Christ to the Roman Pontiff in the person of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, has maintained for centuries in the Apostolic See, the admirable solicitude with which it watches over the welfare of the Catholic religion in all the earth.”

But the Pope pretends to be not only the guardian of the Church,

but also of the *Traditions of the Fathers*, those *unwritten* rules of faith and action, which he has power to introduce, and to elevate to equal authority with the Scripture themselves. This he does by virtue of his assumed *Infallibility*, and as under the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit. But yet entirely independent of God's written word:—for by these traditions he has rendered the Word of God of none effect. It is asserted, indeed, that the Pope is Christ's Vicar or *substitute* on earth:—that he is Judge in place of God, and can himself be judged by no one. All therefore are bound to obey his decrees, as proceeding from God himself. To such a height of blasphemy have his pretensions been carried, that in the Canon Law he was called “our Lord God the Pope;”—and at his election he is placed upon the high altar of the Cathedral and there adored as a God by the Cardinals. Thus, as St. Paul has foretold of the Man of Sin, he “exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”

By these superhuman assumptions we are reminded that he is also called the “lawless one,”—or that “*wicked one*,” as it stands in our version of the Scriptures—meaning “a person without or above law;” and the *Pope*, by his defiance of divine and human law, has shewn how well he merits the title. In the Popish Catechisms he has abrogated the Second Commandment; and changed the Fourth from “Remember the Sabbath-day,”—to “Remember to keep holy the festivals:”—he has decreed worship to images which God has forbidden—and he has power to decide that the Sabbath shall only be observed for two or three hours, if he pleases. God says, “Marriage is honourable in all men,”—but the Pope says, it is disgraceful in the Bishops and Clergy. When Jesus gave the cup of the New Testament to his disciples, he said, “Drink ye *all* of it,”—but the Pope says, “let only the officiating priest drink.” Jesus says, “Search the Scriptures,”—but the Pope has declared that more harm than good will be the result. St. Paul says, “they are profitable, and make the man of God perfect,”—the Pope asserts that the reading of the Bible promotes heresy and disturbs the peace of the Church.

St. James writes, "Confess your *faults* one to another,"—the Pope decrees, that confession of *sins* must be made to the priest. The Apostle John declares "that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;"—but the Pope says, "No!—the sinner must be purified from the remains of sin in the fires of purgatory." These are a few among the many lawless acts performed by the "Man of Sin"—who, notwithstanding these transgressions, is called "*His Holiness!*" by all the followers of his Creed.

But the dogmas of Popery have been imposed upon the world, by the *great wonders*, as well as by the pretended power of the Pope. "He deceiveth them by means of those *miracles* which he had power to do." These are "lying wonders," or wonders establishing *lies*. Such were the miracles alleged to be wrought at the shrines or by the relics of Saints—such are the winking and bleeding images of the Virgin. Every novelty in doctrine and practice, every departure from the faith and simplicity of the Gospel has been justified and established by wonderful dreams, and visions, and miracles. Every canonized Saint must have wrought miracles. Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, it is said, wrought greater miracles than Christ. And lying wonders are still exhibited. At the time of the cholera in Italy, "the Pope could discover no means by which to arrest the course of the pestilence, except the invocation of the Mother of God, and had recourse to her intercession. He had preached repentance, ordained prayer, and made vows, but the plague ceased not its ravages. Then he commanded the clergy and people to go in procession to the Church of our Lady, and to carry the picture of the holy Virgin, painted by St. Luke, to the Church of St. Peter." The procession, it is said, perfectly arrested the progress of the pestilence. "It was a delightful miracle to behold how the plague ceased along the streets through which the procession passed."

The picture was then placed on the pontifical altar, litanies were chanted, and the Pope offered incense to it, and uttered a prayer "full of sweet hope that Mary had heard the vows and prayers of her people." In this manner the church of Rome establishes her idolatry and blasphemies, by the exhibition of lying wonders.

But the standing miracle of Popery is *Transubstantiation*; by which the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper is changed into the "true, real and substantial body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ." This they declare and believe is performed by every Priest who says mass;—in defiance of the testimony of the senses;—and contrary to our Lord's own explanation of the meaning of the eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood, when he said to his disciples, "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the *words* that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life."

Thus the nations have been deceived, and have worshipped and obeyed the Beast, all except those "whose names were written in the book of life." Those who disobeyed or doubted, experienced his power to "make *fire come down* from heaven on the earth." The thunder and lightning of anathema and excommunication were no vain words or idle ceremonies;—even kings and princes have been scathed by their power: and thousands of holy martyrs at the stake have felt, that the Pope could command "fire on the earth."

But the system of Popery has been established by "the deceiver-fulness of unrighteousness, in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth." Romish unrighteousness is palatable to the natural man—as the idolatrous rites of the heathen were to the Israelites in the land of Canaan. In every heart there is a congenial soil in which the poisonous plants of Popery are apt to take root. And in every Church, when the spiritual life declines, the mystery of iniquity begins to work. It was thus that Popery was gradually introduced; and, as little effort is required to wrench a lifeless limpet from the rock, so, when the love of many waxed cold, it was easy for Satan to detach the Church from the Rock of ages; to lift her off the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, and place her on the rubbish of doubtful traditions, decrees of Popes, and canons of Councils.

The Council of Trent declared that the *Nicene creed* was the "only foundation" of the Church. And it was from the days of the Nicene Council that the Church looked more to the *canons*

than the *Scriptures*, and employed all its energies in *teaching what man ought to believe*;—forgetting its duty, to *teach only what the Bible had revealed*. Heresies without number were then propagated, and floated like clouds in the atmosphere of the Church. The Popes indeed introduced little that was new. For there was scarcely a truth in the Bible that had not been changed into a lie, long before the Pope assumed power as universal Bishop, and claimed to be Christ's Vicar on earth.

But the Pope, with his wand of Infallibility, *fixed* the floating heresies—reduced to consistency the conflicting errors—and formed into one harmonious system, all the emanations of the father of lies. Like Milton's Sin and Death, bridging the “wide anarchy of chaos” —“by wondrous act pontifical”—

“Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or alimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove
From each side, shoaling towards the mouth of hell.
Death, with his mace, petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote, and fixed as firm
As Delos floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move.”

Thus formed and consolidated—it has excited the wonder of the world, and justly merited the title of the “*Masterpiece of Satan*.” Roman Catholics indeed boast that their system is immoveable—*ever the same*. Its long endurance has sorely tried “the patience and faith of the saints:” but, while their patience has its reward, their faith also will be realized, for it rests on a sure foundation. The same “Spirit which spake expressly, that in the latter times some should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and to doctrines concerning demons;”—predicted also, that the “Son of perdition” should be destroyed. The very *name* denoting the fearful end of him “whose coming is after the working of Satan:” that is, with *lying and cruelty*—which is equally the scriptural character of Satan, and the historical character of the Roman Church.

The Beast also, as is emphatically declared in the seventeenth chapter, "goeth into *perdition*,"—or, as it stands in Daniel's prophecy, "shall be slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame"—"to consume and to destroy it unto the end." And this judgment, we are warranted in believing, will come suddenly and unexpectedly—like the startling events which are occurring around us. "Behold (saith our Lord), I come as a thief, blessed is he that watcheth." And of Babylon it is declared, "her plagues shall come in one day, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her:"—"she shall be thrown down, and be found no more at all:"—"for by her *sorceries* were all nations *deceived*; and in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

"See redemption, long expected,
On that awful day appear;
All his people, once despised,
Joyful meet him in the air:
Hallelujah!
Saviour, now thy kingdom come."

Notes referred to at page 220.

THE extraordinary resemblance of the Popish to the old Pagan Religion of Rome, is so curious and striking, that I think the following additional particulars, abstracted from Du Pré's "*Roma Antiqua et Recens, or the Conformity of Ancient and Modern Ceremonies*," will be found interesting. They shew that the "Image" resembled the "Beast" as closely in its ecclesiastical forms and superstitious ceremonies, as in its more outward and political aspect.

Du Pré, when speaking of the authority of the *Popes*, quotes the description given by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, of the ancient Pontifex Maximus;—

"They enact new laws by their own authority, in cases for which the laws in being do not provide. They examine and have the inspection of all the sacrificers, and in general control all who have the first charge of the ceremonies and sacrifices of the gods. They are, moreover, the interpreters and prophets, whom the ignorant people consult about the service of God and the Saints. And if they perceive any so hardy as to disobey their commands, on such they inflict a discretionary punishment, according to the heinousness of the crime. On their parts, they are subject to nobody. They are independent, and not accountable either to the senate or people. When one dies, another is chosen in his place, not by the people, but by the Sacred College." If one did not know, that this Greek author (who was contemporary with the Emperor Augustus,) speaks here of the sovereign Pontiff of the heathens, one would be apt to think he is describing the Pope, the picture is so like him! The Pagan Pontiff appointed the Festivals and regulated the Calendars;—the Pope assumes the same power. The Pagan Pontiffs, when Emperors, disposed of kingdoms, and made and deposed kings;—so likewise, from the time of Gregory VIIth's pontificate, nothing is more common than to see Kings deposed by the authority of the Popes. This point of conformity between them, fulfils what is said in the Revelation (xiii. 12,) that the "second Beast would exercise all the power of the first." But the most odious conformity is the homage both have required. To both was given the appellation of *God*. The Emperors and Pagan Pontiffs were worshipped, as Aurelius assures us of Diocletian. The same honour is paid to the Popes, not only in the conclave, immediately after their election, but on many occasions beside. The last excess of the ancient Emperor's pride, was that some of them, as Caligula and Heliogabalus, required their feet to be kissed:—the Popes have sometimes seen even Emperors kissing their feet devoutly in honour of the Saviour; and the Cardinals "come by turns to pay their obedience, kissing the feet of the newly elected Pope."

The High-Priest of the Pagans had under him a great number of people attached to the service of religion—in imitation of whom the Pope hath his College of Cardinals, and others of inferior rank. The very *vestments* of the present ecclesiastics have been formed from the pattern of those of the ancient Pagans. The crosier, or Bishop's staff, is borrowed from the lituus, which their Pontiff made use of when they performed their sacrifices, and the Augurs, when they consulted the flying of birds. The amict, the albe, the stola, and the pelt, are in imitation of the robes of the heathen

priesthood ; even Cardinal Baronius observes, that "the ancient Pagans wore the surplice, and used the ring and mitre : and the sacrificing flamins were clothed with a vest of fine linen, called *alba vestis*."

The *revenues* of the Clergy arise from the same spring with those of the Pagan sacrificers ; for they had their offertory, annates, obits, &c.

The heathens also had sundry *convents* or societies of religious men and women, who took upon them the name of the god or saint to whom they devoted themselves, and whose rule they observed. "Herein," says Polydore Virgil, "the Christians have followed the footsteps of the heathens." And the Abbott Marolles acknowledges, that "the Vestal Virgins, who vowed a perpetual chastity, had a very great resemblance with our nuns."

There were begging *Friars* too, among the heathen, as there are among the Roman Catholics, who carried with them images of their gods, giving the people to understand that the gods would be propitious to those who gave or would give them something. St. Jerome thus describes them : "They affect a dejected countenance, that the world may take notice that they fast ; when they are looked on they sigh, cast down their eyes, cover their faces, and scarce leave room for one eye to see. They wear black vestments, with a girdle of sackcloth ; they affect to have dirty hands and feet,—their belly alone, because that cannot be seen, is at full ease, &c. Some there are who clothe themselves with hair shirts ; with cowls artfully made, to affect childish innocence. Thus accoutred you would take them for owls or buzzards." Is not this a pleasant description of the monkish clothes, and a true description of the modern Friars ? who, like those of St. Jerome's time, have formed themselves after the model of the Pagan philosophers.

Celibacy is of no better extraction. It was in great esteem among the heathen philosophers. The Athenian hierophantes and Egyptian and Phrygian priests adopted means to render themselves impotent. The devil, who delights in pollution, banished chaste marriage from his profane altars, because it is the only remedy God hath appointed against incontinency. This evil has, from thence, crept first into the Jewish Church, where the Essenes abstained from wedlock, as Josephus and Pliny testify ; and the same has happened in the Christian Church, in order to fulfil the prediction of St. Paul, in his first epistle to Timothy.

The *abstaining from meats* is also a pure imitation of the Pagans, as we learn from St. Jerome, and other ancient writers. So are the scourgings and austerities of the Capuchins, of the penitents, and the flagellating bro-

therhood. He who was a murderer from the beginning, hath taken delight in anticipating the torments of mankind. Whatever superstition may now do, it exercises on its slaves no other cruelty than in ages past. The hair-cloth and the stripes, which are in our days valued at so high a rate, are no other than the customs of the priests of Bellona; who drew blood, which they received in their hands, to sprinkle it on that idol, as Tertullian relates.

The sacrifice of the *Mass*, so holy, and so wonderful, in the estimation of Papists, is altogether of Pagan invention. The Abbot Marolles, maintains it, with formal proofs, very clear and positive, derived from Tibullus, Virgil, and Horace; and another Popish writer, Du Choul, says, the "Romans used to eat, standing in the temples, little round pieces of bread, which they did in honour of the gods, as is done at the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, in the great Church of Lyons." Numa Pompilius ordered, that the sacrificers should turn themselves round several times, in the adoration and salutation of the gods; and Du Choul owns, that this custom passed from the Pagans to them: for they turn themselves, when they say *Mass*, now towards the people, and then towards the altar, as may be seen in the Ritual. The Ritual also expressly enjoins that there be, night and day, one or more *lamps, always burning* before the altar, and this is religiously observed in all churches. This custom took its rise from the Pagan superstition. "The Egyptians were the inventors of lamps in the temples," says Clement of Alexandria. From them the practice passed to the Romans; the principal office of the Vestals being to keep the fire, which was called sacred, lighted in their temples; and they performed no religious ceremonies without the use of lamps and torches. This custom of keeping lamps burning day and night in the temples, was so much in use among the Pagans, that the Fathers of the first centuries often made themselves merry with it, as a ridiculous superstition. The Pagans also never sacrificed without *incense*; and history informs us, that in order to try the Christians, they ordered those who fell under suspicion, to throw some grains of incense into the fire, in honour of the idols, which, if they refused to do, they were put to death. Unlike the early Christians, but in imitation of the heathen, no Popish priest celebrates *Mass* without incense, which is blessed on the altar; and he himself is first perfumed with it by the deacon; then the book which he holds in his hand, and the altar itself, on which the sacrifice is to be performed.

On Sunday, before the solemn *Mass*, the priest is used to *bless the water*; which for that reason is called *holy*; after which he first sprinkles himself, and afterwards those who serve at the office; then the altar and the people;

"and this sprinkling," says Bellarmine, "is a *certain expiation*, and a preparation for the future sacrifice." This water is made use of on many occasions, from the opinion, that it sanctifies all things whereon it falls. This is done in imitation of the Gentiles; who had the same opinion of their *holy water*, which they called *lustralis* or *expiatoria*, because of the virtue they attributed to it, of cleansing or expiating every thing on which it was sprinkled. The ancient Romans believed that the water of Mercury's well, when sprinkled on them with a bay bough, had the virtue of expiating sins, especially perjury and lying.

The *Procession of the Sacraments*, which is one of the most solemn ceremonies of the Roman Church, is performed yearly with extraordinary pomp. This was introduced among the Christians, in imitation of the Pagans, as Du Choul acknowledges. He says, "when the sacrificers to the Mother of the gods made their supplications through the streets, they carried the statue of Jupiter, and resting-places were erected whereon to place the statue. The like to which we now observe in France, on the solemnity of Corpus Christi-day." Let those who yearly see the ceremonies of that procession compare what is then done, with the description given by Pagan authors, of the processions of Ceres, Isis, and Diana, and they will find them perfectly agree.

The introduction of *Holy days* into the Christian religion was also made from Paganism. The President Fauchet in his *Life of Clovis*, confesses that instead of the ancient "*Pervigilia* and *Lectisternica*, they rejoiced on the eves of the anniversaries of their martyrs. In lieu of the *Februa*, *Vinalia*, *Robigalia*, *Ambarvalia*, &c., they feasted or observed the Purification, made processions, rogations, and litanies, in which Jesus Christ and the saints were called upon, instead of Jupiter or other false gods of the heathen." And Polydore Virgil, after quoting Tertullian's description of the licentious heathen festivals, makes this reflection: "When Tertullian wrote these things, he did not think the time would ever come when these very things might be applied to the Christians, for which he there ridicules the Pagans. But the time is come, when we rather solemnize the feasts of the Cæsars, than those of the Christians."

The *Feast of the Purification*, also called Candlemass, is celebrated in honour of the Virgin Mary; when the people go in procession round the churches, each holding a consecrated wax candle in his hand. A similar feast was celebrated by the old Romans, in the month of February, in honour of Proserpine; when the Roman ladies went in the night time round the temples with lighted flambeaux in their hands. In the same month the

Pagans celebrated the feasts of *All Souls*, or the commemoration of the Dead, which has been removed by the Church of Rome to the first of November.

The *Invocation of the Saints* is altogether of Plato's invention, whose doctrines have been blindly admitted by the ancient Fathers of the Church; for he taught that as God did not mix with men, there were mediating spirits, who receive our prayers, and carry them to the Supreme Being. The Pagans were not allowed to offer up their prayers or vows, but to such as the Senate by their suffrages had placed in the number of the gods; their cause was pleaded before the tribunal of men, and if they did not prove favourable, they were not esteemed as gods, "Wonderful!" says Tertullian, "the god-head among you depends on the approbation of man." The saints of the Church of Rome are of the same stamp, they cannot pretend to that quality, without the consent of the Pope and his consistory; there it is that their cause must be pleaded, and if men do not prove favourable to them, they are not canonized. As soon as that is done, the exterior worship which is offered up to God, is paid to the saint; they are called upon in the public prayers; churches and altars are dedicated in memory of them; in their honour sacrifices are offered up publicly, as well as that of the eucharist, as the sacrifices of praises and prayers, which are called the "office;" holy-days are celebrated in commemoration of them; and their pictures are drawn with a ray of light, in token of the glory they enjoy in heaven; in a word, they do nothing in honour of God, which they do not practise with as much, if not more devotion, in veneration of the saints. So that we may apply to them, what Tertullian alleged against the Pagans of his time: "What honours do you shew your gods, which you do not practise also to celebrate the memory of dead men. You erect to the one and to the other temples and altars; their statues have the same ornaments." As among the heathen, the power of curing peculiar diseases were assigned to each of their gods; so, in like manner, the powers of the Romish saints are parcelled out. Every kingdom, city, and town, were put by the Pagans under the protection of tutelar deities, and each Roman Catholic country has likewise its peculiar patron saint. Rome is under the protection of St. Peter and St. Paul; Paris under that of St. Genevieve; Venice, St. Mark, &c., and almost all cities revere the holy Virgin for their protectress. The "Garden of the Rosary" has these remarkable words concerning her, "All sorts of people have a singular veneration for the gods who were their particular advocates and protectors, and offered them public

sacrifices; with how much more reason ought we, who are Christians, to praise, exalt, and magnify that great Princess of heaven, the Queen of men, Empress of angels, and, to speak more properly, the Arch-monarch of the universe?"

The Church of Rome hath this also in common with the Pagans, that they *consecrate their Churches* with similar superstitious ceremonies. The Pagans surrounded the intended site of their temples with ribbons and garlands; the Vestal Virgins sprinkled it with lustral water; and the Pontiff who presided over the ceremony, said solemn prayers for the consecration of the edifice, adding thereto the blood of beasts sacrificed on the area. Instead of crowns or garlands, the Pope, first sprinkling the whole place with holy water, plants twelve crosses round it, and before each he sets a lighted taper. He blesses the first stone, and makes thereon several signs of the cross, with many prayers; then placing it in the foundation, he consecrates the place by pouring oil thereon; and concludes with the sacrifice of the Mass.

The altars, relics, holy water pots, asylums, votive pictures, &c., in Romish Churches, had their counterparts in the Pagan temples; but the grand resemblance between them is the *worship of images*. "The Pagan religion is the inventor and mother of images;" and George Cassander, a learned Roman Catholic divine, ingenuously acknowledges, that his Church has herein imitated the heathen. "The matter is too obvious, (he says) to need a more particular explanation; the worship of images and of statues is come to too great an excess, and there hath been too much condescension, in stooping to the inclination, or rather to the superstition of the people; for ours comes nothing short of the utmost excess of folly the heathens have fallen into, whether in the making of their images, the adorning, or in paying supreme adoration to them." The Devil, who is an enemy to the glory of God, and to the salvation of mankind, hath with all his power fomented this inclination to idolatry—instigating them even to make representations of the Deity, and to "change the glory of the incorruptible God, into the resemblance of corruptible men." Tertullian speaks of that attempt with horror, saying, it is not God they represent, but "the Devil whom they embody." Yet the Church of Rome in this also, has followed the custom of the heathen; though they have the word of God warning them against it. (Deut. iv. 15, 16.) The Pagans, like the Papists, paid no reverence to their statues until they had been consecrated by solemn prayers; then they paid their homage to them. So powerful is the virtue of consecration, says St.

Thomas, "that by that things inanimate acquire a spiritual virtue, which makes them fit for the service of God." Images are then looked upon with veneration, and prayed to by their blinded worshippers. Francis de Salle, lately canonized, recommends the Catholics, as one of the principal preservatives against sin, "often to kiss the holy images, as the crucifix and others." But this, we know, from both sacred and profane writ, was the practice of idolators in all ages. The miracles said by Romish authors to be wrought by their images, are equalled if not surpassed, by those attributed to the statues of heathen gods;—some were heard to speak, others seen to sweat even drops of blood, and many healed diseases.

The reason given for the use of images, has been the same in all ages. Pope Gregory I. said, "What the Scriptures are to those who can read, pictures are to the unlearned;" and the Pagan Porphyry, says expressly, "that images are the books of the ignorant."

Our Lord warns us against the custom of the heathens, who, when they pray, use *vain repetitions*; "for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." To understand these vain repetitions, one has no more to do than to read the Ritual of the Church of Rome; the Canonical Hours; the Rosary, and similar Prayer books, where the words *Kyrie Eleison, Christi Eleison, Ora pro nobis, Domine exaudi nos*, are repeated a hundred times, in imitation of the priests who bawled out from morning to noon, "O Baal, hear us!" The Pagans also, like the Papists, said their prayers by tale, and used, as now, a string of beads.

The Church of Rome *prays for the dead*. The Pagans did the same. They had likewise similar sentiments about the *state* of the dead. For Plato not only laid the foundation for *Purgatory*, but raised it to the height it now appears. The souls who have committed venial sins, he condemns to the fire, where they suffer, some a longer, some a shorter time, till their purgation is completed. For these, the Pagans offer up prayers and sacrifices, as is done now, for their comfort, and for obtaining a shorter duration of their pains. Virgil's description of Purgatory in his sixth Eneid, seems indeed to have been copied by Pope Gregory I. in his Dialogues.

From what has been already given (and more might be added,) we may see the entire conformity there is betwixt the Pagan religion, and that of the present Church of Rome; and that the Empire which was revived by Pope Leo III., under Charlemagne, was truly the "image of the Beast" in religion as well as in polity.

LECTURE XV.

THE VISION OF THE 144,000 ON MOUNT SION—TYPICAL OF THE REDEEMED ON EARTH.—SOURCE OF THEIR JOY.—THE FATHER'S NAME IN THEIR FOREHEADS.—FREEDOM FROM IDOLATRY—THEIR FAULTLESSNESS.—THE NEW SONG.—VISION OF THE FLYING ANGEL.—SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.—FALL OF BABYLON.—PUNISHMENT OF IMAGE-WORSHIPPERS.—BLESSEDNESS OF THE DEAD WHICH DIE IN THE LORD.—VISION OF THE SICKLE-BEARERS.—REAPING OF THE EARTH.—TREADING OF THE WINE-PRESS.—REVELATION XIV.

IN the two previous Lectures, our attention has been directed to the 13th chapter of the Apocalypse, and there still remain a few subjects connected with it not yet brought forward. The chief of these are, the seven heads and ten horns of the Beast from the sea. But as the Beast is again prominently brought before us in the 17th chapter, I purpose reserving my further remarks upon it until the vision there recorded comes under review, and shall now proceed to the 14th chapter.

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb

whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." (ver. 1—5.)

What a striking contrast does this vision exhibit to that which precedes it. *There* the saints are represented as oppressed by the power of the Beast—as prohibited from buying and selling—as overcome—as led into captivity—as killed with the sword. *Here* they stand upon mount Sion, singing a new song before the throne of God, and following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Notwithstanding this contrast, both visions doubtless refer to the same period of time. We can have no difficulty in understanding how those, who were considered as the offscouring of all things, who, to use the language of St. Paul, "were counted as sheep for the slaughter," and had become "a spectacle to men and to angels,"—yet could glory in tribulation, and rejoice with joy unspeakable. In the prospect of sufferings and of death, they beheld the Judge of all holding out to them the crown of righteousness,—in the midst of the fire one was with them like unto the "Son of God;" so that even at the martyr's stake was heard the shout of triumph over death and the grave, and loud thanksgivings unto God who gave them the victory "through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Some, indeed, have supposed, that this vision points out the blessedness of those who have already passed from earth to heaven—who have left the church militant and joined the church triumphant,—because they are said to be "redeemed from among men," and to be "without fault before the throne of God."* But

* "Had the 'new song' been simply said to be sung before the throne, the idea would have been admissible of its being the song of the blessed spirits themselves:—those that within the innermost temple of vision, the Holy of Holies, representing the place of the Divine manifestation, were depicted throughout the Apocalyptic vision, as present before Him that sat upon the throne, and from time to time offering Him, with their golden harps and voices, the tribute of adoration and praise. But, as it is, the harpers were evidently separate from that blessed company; and thus

similar expressions in Scripture are used regarding believers still in the body. It is testified of Enoch, that he "walked with God," and of Noah, that "he was a just man, and *perfect* in his generations;" he also is said to have been "righteous before God." Such also was Abraham, to whom the Lord said, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." These were among the "faultless ones" of the Old Testament Church. And Christians in the New Testament are exhorted to be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation;" *because* they have been "redeemed from among men," "not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." By which blood, a new and living way is consecrated for us "into the holiest," that is, "before the throne of God," whereunto we may approach with boldness to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Too often we neglect this princely privilege,—too often we forget "what manner of persons we ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness." Living in the world as if the world were our home, we are apt to get encumbered with its cares, and entangled in its politics; and fail to realize the glorious promises of the world to come. But the citizenship of believers is in heaven; and, even while here

mortals, not immortals. And as the scene of the harping, being *before* the heavenly company in the Holy of Holies, must be supposed to have been the mystic *temple-court* of which I have so often spoken as the perpetual foreground of the Apocalyptic visions, and by consequence the harpers mentioned to have answered to the *Levite* harpers of the Jewish ritual."—*Elliott, Hor. Apoc.* vol. iii. p. 1019. To this may be added, that a representation of the heavenly blessedness of the redeemed in this part of the Apocalypse would seem to be out of place. The struggles of the Church are not yet over, nor has the power of her enemies come to an end, as is manifest in the succeeding visions. At the *close* of the Revelation, the glory of the Church triumphant is depicted—*here*, John sees the happiness of the Church militant. It is thus, as has been observed on other occasions, the chronological arrangement of the visions is maintained throughout, harmonizing with history and experience.

below, they are "the sons of God," though their dignity be veiled in flesh, and often still further obscured by poverty, suffering, and shame.

Such were the 144,000 seen by St. John, standing with the Lamb on mount Sion. This is evidently the same company—the same mystical number depicted in the 7th chapter as sealed by the angel. The era prefigured by *that* vision marked the commencement of the Apostasy, when the simplicity of the Gospel began to be corrupted throughout the whole of Christendom. But, at the same time, there always existed a certain number—the subjects of divine grace, "redeemed from among men,"—who were illuminated, quickened, and stamped with the Father's appropriating mark as his own. In the midst of the severest of God's providential judgments on the earth, their preservation was ensured. Other intimations concerning them are given in the Apocalypse:—that they should be oppressed, and at one time apparently conquered by their enemies; yet that, in reality, they should remain indestructible: and again, suddenly reviving from deep depression, and ultimately triumphing over every foe.

Some commentators refer the accomplishment of this vision to the period of the Reformation; but various reasons lead to the conclusion, that it is anterior to that era, and synchronizes with the previous vision of the two-horned Beast, or the Papacy, from its rise to the meridian of its power.* It is, indeed, a part of the

* Elliott refers the vision to the era of the Reformation; but some of his remarks are more applicable to a period long anterior to that event. "The presented contrast," (of the vision), he says, "of Christ and his people and polity to the Beast and his people and polity, must appear to all, I think, very evident and striking. And it will only appear the more so to any one conversant with Romish views and Romish language, during the 1260 years of Papal supremacy, from the circumstance of the Pope's usurpation to himself and his adherents of all the characteristics here ascribed to Christ and his saints. For the Pope's city, according to them, was the *Holy City*; his supremacy and see, its mystical *Mount Zion*; professing Christendom subject to him, the *twelve tribes of Israel*; they that became crusaders at

Apocalyptic scroll *written without*, and intended to fill up or to amplify that which was *written within*; and appears to stand parallel with the vision of the two witnesses (in the 11th chapter), who were appointed to prophesy 1260 days, "clothed in sackcloth." The 144,000 are, indeed, the same witnessing servants of Jesus, under another designation. Their description also as "*first-fruits*," implies that they existed during the early times of Christianity.

But their appearance in the one chapter, offers a striking contrast to that in the other. In the one they are suffering, in the other they are rejoicing. In the one vision they are seen as walking in the midst of men, in the other as standing before the throne of God. *There* we see them as the fire which man in vain attempts to quench; *here* we perceive the secret source of the unfailing oil which fed the flame. In short, we have exhibited before us, on the one side their temporal, and on the other their spiritual condition.

The Lamb was with them on mount Sion. When our Lord was about to ascend into heaven, he said unto his disciples, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And here, in St. John's vision, the Church is assured, that the Lord had not forgotten his gracious promise. The same thing was, indeed, exhibited to St. John, by the vision of Jesus in divine majesty walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: shewing that the Church is never separated from her Head,—that He watches over her with unceasing care; and though He may sometimes seem to hide his face, it is but for a little season, that the faith and patience of the saints may be exercised and perfected.

" Christ, thy all-atoning death,
Is our life while here below ;
Strengthen thou our feeble faith,
Constantly thy aid bestow :

his mandate, against infidels or heretics, the *takers up of the cross to follow Christ*; and the faithful monks and nuns of his jurisdiction, the Apocalyptic 144,000 privileged hereafter to follow the Lamb, as the *virgin bride of Christ*."—*Horæ Apoc.* iii. p. 1015-16.

In thy mercy we confide,
Safely to the end us guide:
Zion, if thy Head depart,
Void of life and strength thou art."

Mount Zion is a well-known appellation bestowed upon the Church, and used in the Old Testament as well as in the New. The prophet Isaiah, predicting the glory of the latter day, calls the people of the Lord, (lx. 14) "The Zion of the Holy One of Israel." Again he says, "The Lord shall comfort Zion," (li. 3); and, as if referring to this very vision of St. John in Patmos, he adds, (li. 11) "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." And the apostle Paul, contrasting the Mosaic dispensation with the Christian, tells the believing Hebrews, that "they are *not come* unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest;" "but ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

This is spoken of the Church yet upon earth. It shews also her connection with that in heaven, and leads to the conclusion, that the vision before us, of the 144,000 standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion, prefigures the comparatively small remnant that constituted the Church of God during the interval that elapsed between the general apostasy in the fourth century, and the Reformation under Luther: when the sealed servants of God remained for ages in obscurity,* like the seven thousand in Israel, known only to the

* May not *Mount Zion* also have reference to the *security* of the Waldenses in their fastnesses among the *Alpine mountains*?

God whom they worshipped. Not that such was always the case—they came forth as witnesses for Jesus, and excited the enmity, and endured the wrath of the world, and of an apostate Church.*

They had “the Father’s name written in their foreheads;” some copies read, “having His name and the Father’s written in their foreheads”—that is, “the name of the Lamb and of God”—the name they will retain even in the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxii. 4.) This distinguishing mark of the saints has been shewn in a previous Lecture to signify that simple faith and entire dependence on the atoning blood of the Lamb of God for salvation, which led them to reject all and every species of idolatry and superstition, however venerated or plausible. And by nothing were they more distinguished from the worshippers of the Beast around them. They also are described in the previous chapter as having a *mark*—and their mark (as already described) was *idolatry*—the worship of saints and images and relics. Like the Samaritans, spoken of in the 2nd Book of Kings (ch. xvii.) “They made gods of their own—and they feared the Lord, and *served* their *own gods*—neither did they after the statutes, or the ordinances or the law and commandments which the Lord commanded Israel....So they [the Papists and the Samaritans] feared the Lord, and served *their* graven images, both their children and their children’s children, as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.” It was thus, while idolatry branded the Church of the apostasy, that the “worship of the Father in spirit and in truth,” marked the despised and persecuted remnants of the Waldensian and Bohemian Churches—whose very names became terms of reproach among men; but they were “written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.”

* “The silence of these people (the Waldenses and Albigenses) in the ages preceding their persecution by Pope Innocent III. and his successors, is exactly parallel with its corresponding circumstance in the history of Asia. Like the chosen seed of Abraham in the land of Egypt, they were reserved in obscurity, to renew the knowledge of God when it should be effaced by the prevalence of corruption.”—*Browne’s Real State of England*, p. 47.

Their freedom from all taint of idolatry is especially referred to in the fourth verse, "These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins." Every careful reader of the Bible is aware, that the word *adultery* is frequently used to denote *idolatry*; it was, in the Israelites, unfaithfulness to the Lord, turning aside from Him, "their maker and their husband." "I will set my face, saith the Lord, (Lev. xx. 5,) against that man and against his family, and will cut him off, and all that go a-whoring after Molech, to commit whoredom with him"—and "the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a-whoring after them, I will even cut him off from among his people." So, because Jerusalem had broken the covenant of the Lord and multiplied her idolatries, she is compared by Ezekiel, to a shameless harlot. The same comparison is used by the prophet Hosea, where the Lord speaks of the Jewish Church as His unfaithful wife. Such also is the similitude used to designate the apostate and idolatrous Church in Christendom: she is called in the seventeenth chapter of this book "The Mother of Harlots."—How significant then is this characteristic of the 144,000, "They are virgins." They were such as St. Paul desired the Corinthian Church to be, when he said, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ:" but he feared lest they should be "corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." (2 Cor. xi. 3.)

So simply did the Waldenses and other so-called heretics cleave to Jesus and his all-sufficient atonement, that they refused to reverence the images and pictures of our Lord's passion, believing that it was "no other than idolatry." In like manner they resisted the commemoration of the saints, and veneration of their relics; maintaining that "the saints after their death, being ignorant of what is passing on earth, can aid no one by their intercession: and that to their relics not a whit more reverence is due, than to any ordinary bones of mere animals." Thus were they "undefiled" by the slightest taint of idolatry.

And the simplicity of their faith, and the sincerity of their

obedience, is still farther denoted in the next clause of the verse;—"They follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." "If any man serve me," said Jesus, "let him follow me." They cleave unto Him as a faithful wife unto her husband—through evil report and good; in poverty and sickness, as well as in health and prosperity—"His reproach they count a pleasure." Nor did they shrink from following the Lamb when called upon to suffer even unto *death* for his sake. They took up the cross and followed him in "righteousness, faith, charity, peace," treading in his holy footsteps. They also followed his example of active obedience; testifying and preaching the word, and doing good unto all men. Listen to the testimony given even by their enemies—"There was no fault to be found with them, except that they rejected the doctrines and authority of the Church of Rome." Like Daniel, the occasion found against them was concerning the law of their God. They were irreproachable in manners—distinguished for chastity, temperance, and industry. "In their mouth was found no guile"—thus resembling our blessed Redeemer; for of the Waldenses it is recorded, "they do not carry on commerce, in order that they may avoid falsehoods, oaths, and frauds. They abstain from scurrility, detraction, and levity in discourse, and also from lying and swearing."*

It is added in the vision, "they are without fault before the throne of God." Of what Church can this be said *since* the era of the Reformation? All have, more or less, been animated by a worldly or a superstitious spirit—and the simplicity of the Gospel has given place, in too many instances, to vain ceremonies or cold formality. But of the Church before the Reformation—the Church against which the Dragon waged war,—the testimony of history warrants the application of the text—"they were without fault before the throne of God;" for they "received the Holy Scriptures *alone* as the rule of doctrine, rejected the formal observance, and rites of the Romish Church, and followed a strict rule of life"—their persecutors themselves bearing witness.

* Reineries, the Inquisitor, (A. D. 1250) quoted by Elliott, *Horæ Apoc.* ii. p. 692.

But it was not by their doctrine or their deeds that they could stand justified in the sight of God ; for this they depended entirely upon the Lamb whom they followed, even Christ, who “loved the Church and gave himself for it ; that he might sanctify and cleanse it, and present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish ;” and the 144,000 are said to be “redeemed from among men.” Not meriting salvation by their own works, but ascribing *all* to the sovereign grace and love of God.

“Thy blest people, trusting in thy merit,
On the earth’s extended face,
From each other far, but one in spirit,
Sound with one accord thy praise :
May we never cease to make confession,
That thy death’s the cause of our salvation ;
We to Thee, our Head and King,
Joyful Hallelujahs sing.

As the twenty-four elders, the representatives of the Church in heaven, sing before the Lamb, “*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.*” so these “redeemed” ones, the Church on earth, are described as singing the same “new song before the throne, and the four beasts, and the elders.”

“Unwearied they prolong,
And joyfully repeat,
This blessed Gospel-song :
’Tis ever new and sweet.”

This glorious company is farther described, as being “the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” As the first-fruits of the earth were offered to the Lord in the temple, so believers in general are said by St. James, to be “a kind of first-fruits of his creatures”—in reference to that coming deliverance of the whole creation from the bondage of corruption under which it “now groaneth and travaileth.” But the first-fruits in this vision, seem to be especially entitled to the appellation—not only as being peculiarly holy and

devoted, but as being a small number, a few only who were redeemed from the earth, in the earlier ages of the Church—merely an earnest or pledge of that great harvest which should follow upon the more general diffusion of the Gospel—when the Redeemer “shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.”

Of the coming of that glorious period, an intimation is given to St. John, in the next vision, as recorded in the 6th and 7th verses.

“I saw (he says) another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

This is supposed by some commentators to have a primary reference to the days in which we now live—when the everlasting Gospel is carried with unexampled rapidity from one nation to another, by means of Bible and Missionary Societies. But the arrangement of the various visions in the chapter, and their evident connection with the preceding and following, lead us to believe that this vision of the flying angel points especially, in the first place, to the era of the Reformation under Luther. It has already been shewn, when speaking of the command given to St. John, to “prophesy again, before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings,” how speedily the Gospel was diffused among the nations of Europe, by the noble band of Reformers. Previous to that event it was *not* the everlasting Gospel, but the uncertain traditions of man which were preached in the churches of Christendom. The Reformation was emphatically the *revival* of Gospel preaching—the proclamation of good news—of salvation for all through the one atonement made on Calvary. This was the doctrine which Luther preached from the pulpit of Wittemberg—and it was carried from nation to nation, as if by a flying angel; for within seven years, we read, it was successfully preached (before princes as well as people,) not only in Germany—but in England and Scotland, in Sweden, Denmark, Pomerania, Poland, in France, Belgium, Spain,

and Italy. This was, as it were, the first flight of the angel, and the primary meaning of the vision. But the angel is still flying, on untiring wings, at a higher elevation, and with a wider sweep. The Gospel is carried beyond the boundaries of Europe, unto the utmost ends of the earth. The Missionary and the Bible are found alike in the icy regions of the north, and under the burning skies of India:—the savage Greenlander, the degraded Hottentot, and the enslaved Negro, the polished Hindoo, the ferocious New Zealander, and the plodding Chinese, all hear in their own language the same purifying, enlightening, and ennobling Gospel,—all humbly sit at the foot of the same Cross—all vow allegiance to the same King—all participate in the same glorious hope;—and

“Every where with shoutings loud,
Shouts that shake the gates of hell,
Christ’s anointed witness-cloud,
Of the great redemption tell.”

And we look forward with confidence and earnest expectation to the complete fulfilment of the vision, “when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

As the preaching of the Gospel throughout the earth has been *progressive* since the period of the Reformation until now, and as its progress at the present day has been wonderfully accelerated—so we may thus understand the warning voice which the angel uttered in his flight. The threatened judgments of God upon the earth *did* commence at the same time the Gospel of truth began to spread. The Reformation was, among Christian nations, the cause of strife and division, as our Lord foretold its first preaching should be among the Jewish households. It was like “*fire* sent upon the earth.” The exhortation of the angel to glorify God and worship him alone, has been neglected by the majority of the nations of Europe—and therefore the judgments that have befallen them, during the last three hundred years, have been increasing in intensity; and men are now looking forward to a final and impending catastrophe, that shall change the moral and political aspect of the world.

But the vision which immediately follows indicates judgment on

an apostate and corrupt *Church*—distinct from the judgments threatened on the *earth*. For St. John says, “there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” This is the first time the *mystical* Babylon is mentioned—and it is clearly identified with the two-horned beast which is described in the previous chapter as “exercising power over the nations,” and compelling all that dwell on the earth to become idolaters, except those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. The same power and influence is here implied by the figurative expression, “she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath (or, of the inflaming wine) of her fornication.” Now the time of her judgment is at hand; and the angel announces it as if already accomplished—“Babylon is fallen, is fallen.” Precisely the same language is used, by the prophet Isaiah, when predicting the destruction of the *literal* Babylon; although the event did not happen till nearly two hundred years after the prophecy was uttered. (Isa. xxi. 9.)

The Waldenses were the first who applied the name of Babylon to the Church of Rome; and when Luther began to write against her errors, he soon came to the same conclusion,—attaching to her the fearful character given to Babylon in the Apocalypse,—and unhesitatingly expressing his conviction of her impending destruction.

At the Reformation, Papal Rome indeed began to *fall*. As was explained in a former Lecture, it was then “the tenth part of the city fell;” and seven of her suburbs or dependencies were broken off. Her influence over the nations, from that time forth, was diminished, and she no longer ruled as a queen in the earth. But the final fall of Babylon is referred to, again and again, in the Apocalypse, as an overthrow sudden and irremediable. Like a “millstone cast into the sea,” with “violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” In the full realization of this vision, the fall of the Papacy, or *outward structure* of the Roman Catholic Church is set before us; and in the next vision is exhibited the punishment of her members.

"And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." (ver. 9—11.)

Here we have, again, a distinct allusion to the remarkable vision in the 13th chapter. *There* it was declared, that those who *refused* to worship the image of the Beast should be killed. But *here* the worshippers of that image, who have the mark of the Beast in their forehead or in their hand, are threatened with eternal torment. Of this fearful doom our Lord warned his disciples, when he shewed them what things they should suffer for his name's sake, and exhorted them not to "fear them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

This destruction—this pouring out of the wrath of God upon his enemies—is again predicted in the 19th chapter, and afterward in the 20th and 21st; and in such impressive though figurative language, as leads us to suppose that their punishment will not be confined to the invisible world, but will, in some extraordinary manner, be manifested upon the earth. Just as the saints were slain in the sight of the Beast, and were made a spectacle to angels and to men; so these worshippers of the Beast and his image, shall be "tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." And the prophet Isaiah, speaking of the same final destruction of the enemies of the Lord, says of those who shall come up to worship in Jerusalem, that "they shall go forth and *look upon* the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."—(lxvi. 24.)

Will the veil that now separates the spiritual from the material world be removed, in the millennial period to which we are hastening? Will men, yet in the body, be enabled to behold the torments of the wicked, and to hold converse with angels and the glorified spirits of the just? These are questions which many passages of Scripture would lead us to answer in the affirmative. But I would only remark, that the intercourse of man with his Maker, and with the spiritual world, constituted the chief felicity of our first parents in Paradise; and it was to restore man to that happy state which he lost by the fall, and to destroy the works of the Devil, that the Son of God was manifested on the earth. What the privileges and the glory of the sons of God shall be *hereafter* doth not *yet* appear. But if we look for that glory, and hope to participate in those privileges, we shall be growing daily in the likeness of our Redeemer *now*.

The vision of St. John suddenly changes from the *misery* of the worshippers of the Beast to the *blessedness* of those "that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." "Here," it is said, "is the patience of the saints." (ver. 12.) Their patience had been long tried—it had had its perfect work. They had endured unto the end, and now cometh salvation. John heard a voice from heaven saying unto him, "Write,* Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from

* The command to "*write*," is generally understood as addressed to St. John in his representative character; and denotes the importance of the subject, and the publicity which would be given to it in that particular era of the Church's history to which it refers. The doctrine of the glory of the coming Millennium, and the consequent blessedness of the saints, especially of those who shall have part in the first resurrection, we may soon therefore expect to hear more generally and emphatically proclaimed, than it is at the present day. The Church may require this, if, as many believe, she have yet to pass through a sharp and fiery trial before the end of the dispensation. Keeping this expectation in view, might not the passage be thus rendered: "Blessed are the dead which die *for* or *on account of* the Lord, from henceforth"?

their labours, and their works do follow them." (ver. 13.) They *rest* from their labours; but of the ungodly it is said, "they have *no rest*, day nor night." Like Lazarus, the one is comforted while the others are tormented.

But the particular period, indicated by the words "*from henceforth*," when this peculiar blessedness awaits the saints, has given rise to many conjectures. Bishop Newton and others think, that it refers to the writings of Luther against Purgatory, whereby the blessedness of those who died in the Lord was thenceforth more clearly revealed and better understood. But this is unsatisfactory; as it makes the passage refer to the *feelings* here, and not to the *state* hereafter, and applies it to *all* "who die in the Lord," and not to those especially who depart at the period predicted in the vision.

We have observed, that the peculiar torment of the wicked, in this same vision, arises from their participation or involvement in the grand catastrophe by which Babylon and all her supporters shall be overthrown. May not, then, this peculiar blessedness of the saints have reference also to their participation in the accomplishment of the same great object. That eventful time, when the kings of the earth shall make war with the Lamb, and "they that are with him, the called, and faithful, and chosen." Those joined to the Lord in that last struggle, will thus resemble the Levites, who, at the call of Moses, ranged themselves "on the Lord's side," and slew the worshippers of the golden calf: for this work, as a reward of their zeal and faithfulness, they obtained a special blessing, (Ex. xxxii. 29; Deut. xxxii. 8—11,) and were chosen, instead of all the firstborn Israelites, to minister before the Lord in the tabernacle. (Num. iii. 31.)

We know, that the final victory obtained by the Lamb over every foe, will be followed by the Millennium; when the martyrs and confessors of Jesus shall live and reign with him. Such are pronounced "blessed and holy." But a great change will also take place on the earth. Man's happiness will be increased and his life lengthened. As saith the prophet Isaiah, (lxv. 20,)—"There shall no more thence be an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not

filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old.—They shall build houses and inhabit them, and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them: they shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for as the days of a tree (*a thousand years*) are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble: for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.”

This life of lengthened activity and exalted happiness, will be doubtless followed, after death, by a corresponding state of blessedness—such as this passage in the Apocalypse intimates:—“They shall rest from their labours, and their works do follow them:”—the reward of their works, not reserved till the day of judgment, (see Matt. xxv. 35, &c.) but given to them immediately after death. So that, “as one star differeth from another star in glory,” we may infer, that those who “die in the Lord, from henceforth,” will differ from those who have gone before them.

St. John, after this prediction of the blessedness that shall eventually be enjoyed by the saints, beheld a vision, which seems to prefigure two remarkable eras in the history of the world; and they appear to be foreshadowed in this place, as signs and tokens of the approaching fall of Babylon, and the coming of the end of the present dispensation; signs also by which the state of blessedness shall be ushered in, and by which the Church of God may be apprized of its near approach, and prepared for the change that shall ensue. Even as our Lord foretold to his disciples those wars and rumours of wars, and signs of desolation, which should precede the destruction of the Jewish state and nation.

“I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud, one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head, a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle and reap, for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And

another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.”—(ver. 14—20.)

In this passage one judgment is distinguished as the reaping of the harvest,—the other as the gathering of the vintage; the one succeeding the other, as in the course of nature the vintage succeeds the harvest. The same language is employed by the prophet Joel, when denouncing God's judgments on the enemies of his people—and apparently having reference to the same events:—“Put ye in the sickle,” he says, (iii. 13) “for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down, for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great.”—“The harvest is ripe,” or *dried*, as the word signifies in the original. This evidently does not refer to the end of the world, wherein the angels are to be the reapers of the harvest; though it seems to denote a time of general wickedness and want of faith—of infidelity and forgetfulness of God—which called forth His sharp judgments, that the inhabitants of the earth might thereby learn righteousness. Perhaps of no period since the great Reformation might this be more safely affirmed, than of that immediately preceding the French Revolution. The state of Europe was then lamentable. Protestants as well as Papists seemed generally to have forgotten the Lord; no fruits of righteousness were brought forth—the harvest was dried up:—for infidelity and blasphemy had overspread the earth. The time for *reaping* had arrived; and at the cry of the angel out of the temple, the sharp sickle was thrust into the earth,—and “the earth was reaped.”

It is unnecessary at present, to point out, by a reference to the history of that period, how generally and how effectually the

European earth was reaped, by the wars which arose out of the French Revolution. It is well known, that every country, except our own, was successively and repeatedly converted into a great battle-field—and men fell before the cannon and the sword, as corn falls in harvest by the sickle of the reaper.

“The reaper” in the vision is described as “like unto the Son of man,” sitting on a cloud, and having on his head a golden crown. This description has led many to believe, that our Lord himself is here intended: especially from the use of the expression “like unto the Son of man,”—which we know is a title applied by Jesus to himself. But it is also applied to the prophet Ezekiel; and seems here to signify some human agent, endowed with great power and authority. It is merely substituted for the word *angel*,—for we read that “*another angel*” gave him the order to reap—indicating that the latter had authority over the former; which certainly precludes the idea of the term “Son of man” being synonymous with “Son of God.” Besides we have a description afterwards given us (ch. xix) of Jesus coming forth in His majesty, as the “King of kings and Lord of lords”—to judge and make war—when his interposition will be made clear and manifest to the armies of heaven and earth.

The “Son of man,” in this passage, I therefore believe to be a *human* instrument, raised up in the providence of God to execute his judgments—and crowned with great power and glory. And of whom can this be said with more propriety, than of Napoleon Bonaparte, the late Emperor of the French? He was not born a king—he was one of the sons of the people; but he was exalted to kingly dignity—and even placed the imperial crown upon his own head. Further, to identify him with the reaper of the earth, he continued personally to lead his armies, although he had “on his head a golden crown.” He was emphatically a warrior-king—wielding with equal energy, the sword and the sceptre. With his sharp sickle he truly reaped the earth. But the *cloud* on which the reaper is represented as sitting, is remarkably significant of the instability of the throne on which Napoleon was placed;

his power was like the morning cloud, and soon vanished away. He reigned but a few years, and his baseless throne melted from beneath him. The residue of his life was spent in exile, on a barren rock—cast aside like a sickle when the harvest is over. For the earth was reaped, and his work was done.

This, as I have said, was one series of judgments, intended in the providence of God, to prepare the Church for the end of the present dispensation. It produced a shaking among the nations. It especially roused the Protestant world from its lethargy, and led to a more zealous preaching of the Gospel at home, and the formation of societies to spread its blessings into heathen lands. The good work then begun, amidst wars and rumours of wars, is still carried on by the Protestant Church, with increasing energy and success.*

Yet we are taught to look for another and more dreadful outpouring of the wrath of God on the earth, though varying considerably in its nature from that which has passed away. The former affected the *harvest*, this affects the *vintage*. The one referred to the inhabitants of the earth, as members of political communities—the other refers to them, as connected with ecclesiastical denominations. For so the *vine* and the *vintage* are used to denote the Jewish Church. (See Jer. ii. 21; Is. v. 1—7; Hos. x. 1.)

But this “gathering of the clusters of the vine,” is still future, and is evidently identical with what is afterwards called the “battle of Armageddon,” when the Beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies, shall be gathered together to make war against him that sits on the white horse, and against his army. There the terrible destruction of the enemies of God is prefigured by the same scenery. “He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” (Rev. xix. 15.)

* May not the facts referred to in the text be viewed as illustrative of the meaning of the angel coming out of the temple (in the 15th verse); that the watchful providence of God not only raises up and directs the sword of the destroyer, but over-rules it for blessings to the Church, and through the Church for extensive benefits to the world at large?

By what human instrumentality *this* is to be effected, it would be presumptuous to say. But we are told, that the angel who holds the sharp sickle "to gather the vine of the earth," comes "out of the temple which is in heaven." The former reaper "sat upon a cloud." The temple in heaven is an expression frequently used in the Apocalypse to denote the Church on earth; and we may therefore infer, that the latter sickle-bearer will belong to the Church, or be called forth in its defence,—that he will be on the Lord's side, and marshal *his* host against the antagonistic powers gathered together by the Dragon, the Beast, and the false Prophet.*

One thing is clear:—that these congregated enemies of the "faithful and true" will be defeated with tremendous slaughter,—the blood of the slain in the "wine-press," or the battle-field, "reaching unto the horse bridles," by the space of 1600 furlongs, (that is equal to twenty-five square miles). A similar phrase is used by Jewish writers when relating the destruction of their countrymen at the city of Bitter, by the emperor Hadrian.

Whether we are to understand it literally or not, it seems to predict a greater slaughter than has ever yet taken place on the face of the earth. The very symbol employed—"the wine-press"—conveys the idea of an immense effusion of human blood.

The same symbol also indicates the *locality* of that decisive scene of conflict. It has often been remarked, that the symbols of Revelation are exceedingly exact and appropriate; the prophetic figures being every where consistent with the contemplated historical scenery. As the reaping of the *harvest*, therefore, in its fulfilment was chiefly confined to the *corn-growing* countries of Europe; so we ought to look for the locality of the *wine-press* in a land abounding with vines.

The wine-press is also said to be "trodden *without the city*;" that

* The events which have taken place during the last two years seem to be preparing the way for the mustering of the nations to the great and decisive battle, when "the wine-press shall be trodden." See remarks on Rev. xvi. 16, in Lecture XVIII.

is, according to the Apocalyptic meaning of the word "city," beyond the boundaries of the modern Roman empire. The *Holy Land* is, therefore, supposed by many to be the destined battle-field of Armageddon: not merely because it is a land of vines, and beyond the limits of the Papal power, but, also, because its length is about 1600 furlongs, by the space of which the blood from the wine-press will flow. And Old Testament predictions refer to the valley of Jehoshaphat, or the valley of decision, as the place where the Lord "will plead with all flesh, by fire and by sword," and where "the slain of the Lord shall be many." (Joel iii. 14; Isa. lxvi. 16).

On that awful day of decision, on which side shall *we* be ranged? The Lord's enemies belong to all countries, and are found among all classes. Only those shall escape whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life—"who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." And He now says unto us, as he said to his disciples, when foretelling the similar, sudden, and sweeping destruction of the Jewish church and state, "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

"On that day of consummation,

May we sinners mercy find;

Saved with complete salvation,

And not one be left behind:

As wise virgins

May we then before thee stand."

LECTURE XVI.

THE SEVEN VIALS.—THE HARPERS ON THE GLASSY SEA.—THEIR SONG.
—PREPARATION OF THE SEVEN ANGELS.—THE TEMPLE FILLED
WITH SMOKE.—THE FIRST VIAL POURED OUT ON THE EARTH.—THE
SECOND ON THE SEA.—REVELATION XV.; XVI. 1—3.

“AND I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” (ch. xv.)

In the latter part of the 11th chapter, it will be remembered, the

sounding of the trumpet of the seventh angel is recorded, and a brief summary is given of the stupendous results which followed. In this chapter, the Apocalyptic vision reverts to the same subject, and begins to set before us in detail, and with much minuteness, what had before been only briefly and generally intimated. That "the seven angels having the seven last plagues," are intended to develop the judgments announced by the sounding of the seventh trumpet, we have no reason to doubt; especially when we turn to the 7th verse of the 10th chapter, where it is said, "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Under the seventh trumpet, therefore, the mystery of God is to be finished; and as the seven vials are said to contain the seven last plagues, we are warranted in concluding, that as the seventh seal enclosed the seven trumpets, so the seventh trumpet announces the seven vials. Moreover, if these seven last plagues, and the consequent destruction of Babylon, be not the subject of the third woe,—which is announced in the 11th chapter as "coming quickly,"—then the third woe is no where described, as the two former woes have been.

The second woe, as we have already endeavoured to prove, ended with the overthrow of the Greek empire: for to that were the Euphratean horsemen appointed: by them, as it is expressly declared, "were the third part of men to be killed,"—meaning the third part of the old Roman earth. "The rest of the men," it is added, "repented not." The nations of Europe took no warning by the overthrow of the Eastern empire, but continued in their idolatrous practices. Often, indeed, were they terrified by the approach of the Turkish armies; but the terror was as brief as the invasion; for the Turks were not intended to be a woe to Western Christendom, and never made a permanent settlement within its pale.

Besides, on looking at the history of Europe during the last four hundred years, every one must be impressed with this fact,—that the wars which arose among the princes of Christendom produced a thousand-fold more woe, were infinitely more terrible and

destructive to each other, than any of the invasions or victories of the Turks, during the same period.

But the supposed prolongation of the second woe until the eighteenth century, is an error into which several of the gravest commentators have fallen. They have unaccountably delayed the outpouring of the vials until the commencement of the French Revolution; and then, in less than thirty years, that is, from 1789 to 1815, they assert that no less than five of them were poured out.* But the confinement of these vials within such narrow limits has produced a commingling of events and an indistinctness in the interpretation, altogether at variance with the clear and well defined periods of history which have marked (in the earlier portions of the Apocalypse) the fulfilment of the opening of each of the seals, and the sounding of each of the preceding trumpets.

To point out, in the history of these European wars and convulsions, (since the overthrow of the Greek empire,) the fulfilment of the predictions in the Apocalypse, as symbolized by the successive and distinct pouring out of the vials upon the "earth," the "sea," the "rivers," the "sun," and "the seat of the beast,"—all of which we believe to be already past,—will presently occupy our attention.

But let us first contemplate the preparations and arrangements that are made for beholding this series of judgments upon the earth, when the wrath of God shall be poured forth, which shall terminate in "destroying them which have corrupted the earth," and in "rewarding the servants" of the Lord.

Just before the sounding of those trumpets, which symbolized the judgments of God upon the Roman empire in the fourth and succeeding centuries, we find the watchful care of the Lord over his Church set forth, by the vision of an angel sealing the servants of God, and crying to the "four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea," to suspend their work until the sealing was accomplished; that is, until the Church was placed in security.

* See Lecture XVIII.

That security consisted in its obscurity—in its wilderness condition—removed from the presence of men—having no ecclesiastical splendour or political importance. The true Church existed in this condition for many ages.

But in the vision before us, now that the vials are about to be poured out, the Church is brought prominently forward, as victorious and triumphant,—secured against the deadly assaults of her foes; standing boldly before them, as if defying their power. The Church, as an ecclesiastical polity, or united body of believers, is thus represented in the chapter we have read: “I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the *victory* over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.”

It had been predicted that the “Beast should overcome the Saints;” and in a former Lecture we saw how this was fulfilled, just before the appearance of Martin Luther. *Here*, on the contrary, the Saints are represented as having “gotten the victory over the Beast;” which clearly points to a period subsequent to the Reformation, when, though the Church suffered and *was* endangered, yet her existence was never imperilled, and her bulwarks grew stronger and her structure more imposing after every attack. The appearance of the saints on this glassy sea, indicates the same glorious security which is prefigured in the vision of the 11th chapter, when the witnesses “ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them.” They were in *safety as a Church*, and as a *Church* exalted to political supremacy. Both of these visions point to the same period of time. And in both we find similar indications of the wrath of God about to descend upon the world; in the one by the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and in the other by the appearance of the seven angels having the seven last plagues.

The chapters which have intervened between these two visions—and interrupted as it were the description of the effects of the seventh trumpet’s sounding—have been occupied chiefly by a retrogressive and symbolical history of the Church and of her great antagonist

—and also by a fore-shadowing of the brightening glory of the one, and the fearful destiny of the other.

The Beast was no longer victorious. It was now to be overcome. This was remarkably exemplified in the contests of Luther with the Papacy. He wielded the sword of the Spirit with the arm of a giant, and struck down every opponent. First, Tetzel and his indulgences fell before him. Afterwards, the Romish doctors were foiled in every encounter. Cardinal De Vio, irritated by defeat, exclaimed, "I will argue no more with the beast." And in the celebrated Diet at Worms, Luther stood unabashed and triumphant before the Emperor and the Princes.* He "obtained the victory over the Beast and over his image." The great Reformer, in this respect, was the type or representative of all true Protestants; who, by the help of heaven, were emancipated from the Popish yoke, and stood erect in the freedom of the sons of God.

One great result of this freedom, and a striking proof of the victory they had obtained over the idolatrous "mark of the beast," was the removal from the Church and Church-worship of all images and superstitions, and the establishment of a *separate Evangelic Church*. This took place in Saxony, between the years 1525 and 1527—and was speedily followed by similar establishments in the other States which had embraced the Protestant faith.

These are all represented as standing on "a sea of glass mingled with fire,"—singing "the song of Moses the servant of God." This has an evident allusion to the passage through the Red Sea, and the overthrow of the Egyptians; when "Moses and the children of

* "I cannot submit my faith," he said to them, "either to the Pope or to the Councils; because it is as clear as noon-day, that they have often fallen into error. If then I am not convinced by proof from Holy Scripture, or by cogent reasons; if I am not satisfied by the very texts that I have cited; and if my judgment is not in this way brought into subjection to God's word, I neither can nor will retract anything: for it cannot be right for a Christian to speak against his conscience."—"Luther," says his friend Mathesius, "was unmoved as a rock, backed by the *true rock*, the word of the Lord."—*D'Aubigné, Hist. Reformation*, ii. p. 301, 305, 323.

Israel spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." We are not to understand this sea of glass as being the same with the sea "like unto crystal" before the throne of God; for had this been the case the definite article would have been prefixed, as is usual on the recurrence of a figure already used. There are other specific differences. The sea, in this vision, apparently indicates the scene of a triumph over enemies on the earth; whereas the other sea forms part of the glorious furniture of the Court of Heaven; and again, it is not until the very closing scenes of the Apocalypse, that the saints are represented as enjoying the blessedness of the heavenly state. This glassy or smooth sea appeared as if "mingled with fire." Here is another reason for believing that the vision refers to the Church militant, and not to the Church triumphant. For "fire" is the usual symbol by which trials and sufferings are represented, and these the Protestant Church has not been without; while her general condition of peace, safety and tranquillity, is signified by the "*glassy sea*." Her experience has taught her to sing of danger and deliverance, of judgment and mercy.

But the appearance of the sea in the text, is also applicable to that through which the Israelites passed, as has been asserted by many both before and since the days of St. John. An ancient writer * says, "that the mountains west of the Arabian gulf, as the fierce and fiery rays of the sun strikes on them, exhibit the appearance of glowing coal red with fire; and that the splendour, reflected on the sea, dyes its water with a colour similar." The fact of an extraordinary glow and phosphorescence in the Red Sea waters has been matter of modern as well as of ancient observation.†

* Agatharcides, who wrote about 200 years before the Christian era; quoted by Elliott.

† Two years ago a near relative of the author witnessed this phenomenon on a voyage up the Red Sea. On the attention of the Captain of the Steamer being called to it, he said he had frequently noticed similar appearances; but none so striking as the present. The sea, for many miles, was covered with large patches of a blood-red colour.

"But, to enter fully into the parallel, (says Elliot,) we must image to ourselves not so much the reported usual appearance of the Red Sea, but its undoubted appearance to Israel on the early dawn, after that night, much to be remembered, when, emerged in safety from its waters, they looked back from the shore upon them, and prepared their harps to sing the song of Moses. Then the pillar of fire, which had through the live-long night separated between them and their enemies, and shot forth its lightnings to trouble the host of the Egyptians (Ps. xviii. 14, 15), must be conceived to have risen upward, in movement towards its usual place before the camp of the host. And, as it slowly rose, what must have been the fixed and fiery glow, mingled, ever and anon, with the last lightning flashes of divine wrath against Egypt, reflected on the mirror-like sea before the eyes of Israel—that still and glassy sea as we may suppose it—when the east wind, which had been God's instrument for the separation of the water, had been hushed—and before the surge of the returning waves, that covered the host of Egypt, disturbed the still expanse beside them;—an illustration of the tranquillity of God's people vouchsafed sometimes in this world, and ultimately assured to them in the world to come." And what scene could have more accurately or directly prefigured the escape and deliverance of the servants of God from the worse than Egyptian bondage which they had so long endured under the Dragon and the Beast. Wherever Protestantism was established, there they could take their harps and sing, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

This, as I have said, was true of all places where Protestantism was established; but, as has been well observed, in the Apocalypse there seems to be a chorographical truth in the general landscape, and a scenic facility of not merely symbolizing invasions and other events, but of visibly marking the particular localities where such events would take place. In the predictive description of the changes indicated in the visions, however, all the incidents are not given; only the most striking and impressive, the most important

or the culminating point in the history is thus prefigured. And it has occurred to more than one able commentator, that this vision of the harpers on the margin of a glassy sea, though generally applicable to all, yet marks especially the locality and security of one Protestant Church in particular. That locality which we have already pointed out as forming the greatest and most important portion of the tenth part of the city which was broken off in the great earthquake; and which is literally separated from continental Romanism by an ocean-strait. May we not suppose that in this vision, St. John had the Roman world spread out before him in miniature and living landscape, and had his attention especially directed to our own "much-loved isle," with its Red Sea-like and glassy channel dividing it from the rest of Europe; the glorious company of victorious harpers standing on its shore—and the arm of the Almighty encircling it as with a wall of fire.*

And such has it been with England from the days of the Reformation until now. No weapon that was formed against her has prospered. Her fire-defended coast has been impregnable to every foe, while she has proved a refuge to all in distress. When Protestants, in other lands, were persecuted and compelled to flee, because of the sword of the oppressor: in England they found safety, liberty, and a home. Thousands have here been welcomed from the Netherlands, from France, from Bohemia and other States, at various periods of our history, who had escaped from the pursuing Pharaoh,—and here, on the shores of the glassy sea, have struck the "harp of God" in unison with the Church already assembled. And ever and anon as they saw the efforts of Popery baffled, and her weapons shattered in her hand, as they beheld the banner of the Gospel floating victorious, and its enemies prostrate in the dust, as they watched the approach of that mighty armament, designed to crush England and Protestantism at a blow—and saw the right hand of the Lord "dash it in pieces," "in the midst of the sea"—as each vial of Divine wrath was successively poured out—then

* See Elliott's *Horæ Apoc.* part V. ch. v. p. 1157—1167.

did they sing in higher and higher strains the "song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb."

Thus, then, we have set before us in this vision the Protestant world, or the Church of God, represented as harpers by a glassy sea—singing the praises of their King, and watching the effects of his judgments, as they are here indicated by the seven angels, to whom were given seven golden vials, by one of the living creatures before the throne;—shewing us, that those *judgments*, in their time and manner of operation, were ordered and appointed by God himself, and were especially *manifested* in the many signal deliverances which the Protestant Church experienced—in the help she so often unexpectedly obtained—and in the increased strength and prosperity with which she emerged out of every struggle.

In this apocalyptic song, as in the original song of Moses, in the 15th chapter of Exodus, a "reverential fear of God's majesty, and admiration of his excellency, as well as gratitude for his goodness, characterize the spirit of the harpers." They celebrate his almighty power as illustrated in the overthrow of their enemies,—his faithfulness and truth as the King of saints, in all the dealings of his providence towards them,—and his inimitable holiness, which demands the fear and reverence of all his creatures. And as the Israelites by the Red Sea, in their triumphant song, anticipated the reign of Jehovah in the land of Canaan, so, in like manner, the harpers by the sea of glass, recounting their own wonderful preservation, and remembering the promises of their Redeemer, anticipate the establishment of His kingdom over the whole world—yea, that "all nations shall come (come *speedily*, it is implied) and worship before him."*

The angels, to whom are given the seven golden vials or bowls, containing the seven last plagues, are described as coming out of the temple, clothed in priestly robes, "pure and white linen, and girded with golden girdles,"—intimating the direct bearing which these symbolized judgments have upon the state of the Church:

* Horæ Apoc. p. 1169.

and that the agents or instruments employed by God in the manifestation of his wrath, do not, like the trumpet angels, come from afar, or beyond the pale of Christendom, but arise within it, and belong to it. In tracing the course of these judgments in the history of the Church, we shall find this to be the fact.

After the angels had received the vials, it is added, the "temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." So also we read in Exodus (xl. 35) "Moses was not able to enter the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." And again, on the dedication of Solomon's temple (2 Chr. vii. 1, 2), "The glory of the Lord filled the house, and the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord." In each instance, the special presence of God was indicated in that particular place which was set apart for his worship. Under the New Testament dispensation, the Temple of God is the Christian Church, or rather all true believers, who are called the "living stones" of the "spiritual house." But the Courts of this temple are spoken of in the eleventh chapter of Revelation, as given to the Gentiles—signifying the formalism and superstition, which should pervade and overshadow the whole of Christendom.

Commentators have not attempted (so far as I am aware,) an explanation of this expression, "the temple was filled with smoke, so that no man was able to enter." But it seems to have much significance; especially when viewed in connection with the 5th verse, where John says, "Behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was *opened*." Those who date the commencement of the out-pouring of the vials at the period of the French Revolution, can find in the history of the Christian Church, no events which seem to have been prefigured by the *opening* and the *shutting* of the temple, either immediately before or after that time.

But if we believe that the vials began to be poured out soon after the beginning of the great Reformation, we may be able to

perceive the meaning of the opening of the temple in the fifth verse; and the subsequent inability of men to enter into it, as declared in the eighth.

The Reformation itself, as the name implies, and its progress manifested, was an opening of the Christian temple;—it was an invitation to all men, to all nations, to enter into his courts, and “offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Into this open temple, thousands and tens of thousands entered, and joined themselves to the Lord;—several kingdoms and states became wholly Protestant, and some partially so. Now, it is a remarkable fact, that those kingdoms which became Protestant during the first age of the Reformation, or during the life-time of Luther, have remained Protestant ever since—such were Saxony, Holland, part of Switzerland, Sweden, Denmark, Prussia, England, and some smaller states. While those kingdoms, on the other hand, which maintained their attachment to Popery, have, in like manner, continued Popish until this day. The principal of these were France, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Bavaria and Italy. The boundary line on the map of Europe, between Popery and Protestantism, has scarcely undergone the slightest variation during the last three hundred years:—individual members may have left one church and joined the other—but as nations, they still hold the Popish or the Protestant Creed as they did in the days of Luther.* This is a fact, which to many good men has appeared surprising and unaccountable; as if the two-edged sword of the Spirit had lost the sharpness and power with which it cut asunder soul and spirit in the early days of the Reformation.

The Protestant temple, filled with smoke from the glory of the Lord, resembled the fiery pillar which “came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel:” it gave light unto the one, but was a cloud and darkness to the other.

To investigate all the causes which led to this religious phenomenon, would occupy at present too much time. One may be

* See Lecture X.

mentioned, which occurs in the song of the elders, (in chapter xi. 18,) "The nations were angry, and thy wrath is come,—that they should be judged." This anger was early manifested in the attempts of the Popish powers to crush Protestantism: their anger blinded them like smoke, and darkened their minds with prejudice;* so that, according to the symbolical language of the text before us, "no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

But when these plagues shall be fulfilled, (and they are fast drawing to a close,) we know that again the "temple of the ark of his testament" will be opened; and the nations will enter in. Even now, many tens of thousands in Catholic Europe seem ready to enter—the smoke is clearing away around the temple—the vail of prejudice is falling from their eyes—and the Lord is preparing for himself a "willing people in the day of his power"—when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ;" and he shall reign for ever and ever.†

* The unhappy disputes and divisions among Protestants themselves, have no doubt tended to increase the prejudices of Papists, and prevented many from entering into the temple. But perhaps the meaning of the passage may be better understood, by referring to what St. Paul says of the Jews, in 2 Cor. iii. 3—18. They could not steadfastly look on the glory which shone on the face of Moses: and the vail which he put over his face is yet upon their hearts. "Their minds were blinded," so that they could not see Christ in the reading of the Old Testament. Neither can Papists see the spirituality and glory of the New Testament temple service, until they are changed "as by the Spirit of the Lord."

† A mighty struggle has begun between light and darkness, spiritual liberty and despotism. The Bible is penetrating the Catholic countries of Europe in spite of priests and police. In vain were the *Madiai* cast into prison: for in Tuscany, it is asserted, there are 20,000 adherents of Protestantism. In Piedmont, the gospel is spreading. The "*Armonia*," a Popish journal, lately announced, in bitter lamentation, no fewer than 8,000 cases of apostasy from the Church of Rome in Turin alone. The Vaudois College, in La Tour, has seven professors and seventy-five students. The

XVI. 1.—“And I heard, (says St. John) a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.” “Behold,” says St. John in another place, “the third woe cometh quickly.” The voices of the Reformers were still resounding in the Church, when the command to execute judgment on the earth was given.—“For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the same; but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them.”—(Ps. lxxv. 8.)

The “great voice out of the temple” seems synonymous with the sounding of the seventh angel; for we read, when “he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished.” We may, therefore, consider, in the Apocalyptic scene, that while the vials were being successively poured out, the trumpet that ushered them in, still continued to sound, and like that on Mount Sinai waxed louder and louder. The *trumpet* is usually significant of an alarm of war—and such were the previous *six* trumpets to which our attention has already been directed. What else has Europe been since the year 1521, only four years after the era of the Reformation, but an immense battle-field, wherein war has raged with few and short intervals? The echoes of the sixth trumpet had scarcely died away, when the alarm of war was again sounded—“the nations were angry”—and the judgments of God were made manifest.

The vials are poured out on the earth—that is, upon the Papal Roman earth. (The Greek Church and Empire had already been

Waldenses, who for ages never breathed the air of freedom until six years ago, are indeed beginning a fresh career of missionary labour and usefulness: their high and holy mission is the evangelization of Italy. In Nice, the French Evangelical Church has taken root, and is developing itself every day more and more. The Roman states, it has been observed, present the appearance of a complete moral wilderness. The physical power of the Popedom is indeed most despotic there; but there is no part of the Popish world where the moral power of Romanism is so low as at Rome itself.

judged and overthrown under the fifth and sixth trumpets.) And if we compare the present condition of the Catholic countries of Europe with their appearance at the commencement of the sixteenth century, we shall find their power and influence greatly diminished; as if the pouring out of the vials were withering them away*—while, on the other hand, the Protestant states, Holland, Prussia, and especially England, have grown greater and greater—as if the latter, indeed, would eventually fill the whole earth with her humanizing influence, her noble language, her civilizing arts, and her sublime and elevating religion!

“And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.” The earth here denotes the Continent—as distinguished from the sea, the islands and sea-coasts. The local scenery indeed of the first four vials, is marked in the same distinctive manner as in the judgments which followed the sounding of the first four trumpets. In every point of view, the war which began in the year 1521, between the French under Francis I., and the Spaniards under Charles V., was a remarkable fulfilment of the outpouring of this first vial. The Germans, the Swiss, and the English, were soon drawn into the war. Dr. Robertson says, that “this war was the most general that had hitherto been kindled in Europe.” It raged in various continental countries; but the grievous sore was especially felt in Italy, and by “the men which had the mark of the Beast.” Rome itself was taken in 1527, and it is impossible to describe or even to imagine the misery and horror of the scene that followed. “Restrained by no leader,” says Ranke, “the blood-thirsty soldiery, hardened by long privations, and rendered savage by their trade, burst over the devoted city. Never fell richer booty into more violent hands, never was plunder more

* France and Austria need not be excepted: the frequent revolutions in the one state, and the constant dread of insurrections in the other, indicate the unstable foundations on which their power rests.

continuous or destructive.”* “Whatever excesses the ferocity of the Germans, the avarice of the Spaniards, or the licentiousness of the Italians could commit, the wretched inhabitants were obliged to suffer.”† “The Imperialists kept possession of Rome several months, and during all that time the insolence and brutality of the soldiers hardly abated.” “Rome,” adds the historian, “was never treated with so much cruelty by the barbarous and heathen Huns, Vandals or Goths, as now by the bigoted subjects of a Catholic monarch.”‡ The Pope himself, after suffering the extremity of famine, and feeding on asses flesh, was compelled to surrender himself a prisoner, as had also been the fate of the French king, two years before, at the battle of Pavia.

During the first years of this war Germany enjoyed profound tranquillity, which proved, under the superintending Providence of God, extremely favourable to the Reformation, and it continued to make progress daily. This was greatly facilitated by the translation of the Scriptures into the German tongue in 1521. The free cities embraced the Reformation, and the Elector of Brandenburg and other Princes, patronized Luther's doctrines. But soon afterwards, Germany also became the scene of war. The Protestant Princes combined against Charles V.—and their speedy overthrow soon taught them, that not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, was His kingdom to be established and extended. The Papists however had short space for rejoicing; Maurice of Saxony, who had aided the Emperor, now conspired against him; and to the astonishment of all Europe, compelled him, in the zenith of his power, to flee from Germany in disgrace. Protestantism was re-established, and the rising power of Prussia, gave fresh strength and dignity to the cause of the Reformation. Looking at the result of these strange events, we perceive the significancy of the allusion to one of the Egyptian

* Ranke's *Popes*, vol. i. p. 81. † Robertson's works, 12mo. v. p. 368.

‡ See also Miley's *Papal States*, vol. iii. p. 456, where he calls the licentious soldiers who obtained possession of Rome, “Luther's legates”!

plagues,—there “fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image”—for the horrors of war fell heavily upon the Popish worshippers of saints and relics, and upon those who worshipped or obeyed the Emperor, who was the image or representation of the old seven-headed beast or Imperial Rome. The Roman Catholics indeed felt it as a “noisome and grievous sore”—and the Reformation, which they failed to crush by force of arms, they designated as “the pestilential heresy.”

But “the noisome and grievous sore” was experienced literally as well as spiritually. The wars which desolated Europe at that period were accompanied by famine and plague—the latter especially is noticed by every historian. Of the army that sacked Rome, more than half died of the plague; every officer and soldier of the French army, before Naples, was infected by it; other armies suffered in like manner; and multitudes of the people, whose possessions were ravaged or destroyed, perished by the same disease.

The first vial (thus briefly traced,) extended over a period of thirty-eight years, from 1521 to 1559, when the treaty of Chateau-Cambrensis gave peace to Europe—after every portion had suffered from its ravages, except England and Holland; and these two exceptions we must remember, derive their power, almost their existence, from the *sea*, not from the earth.

“The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man; and every living soul died in the sea.” On turning to the 9th verse of the 8th chapter, we read, “the third part of the creatures which were in the sea *died* ;” again, (ix. 15—18) “the four angels were prepared to slay the third part of men”—and “by these was the third part of men killed ;”—but in neither case is it understood that a literal slaughter of the inhabitants of the sea-coast, or of the third part of men in the Roman Empire, took place; but that they were totally subjugated, and deprived of all political power and influence. That this actually took place, we know from history, and from the existing

condition of those countries to the present day. Let us then see what analogous events took place among the modern nations of Europe, to assist us in explaining the figurative language which is here used in describing the effects of the outpouring of the second vial, upon the sea.

The earth, or continent, in the first vial, was made to suffer; and within a few years after the termination assigned to it, the sea became the scene of the judgments of God. In the year 1571 was fought the celebrated battle of Lepanto, wherein the naval power of the Turks was crushed, and their hopes of the supremacy of the sea completely wrecked. But the judgments symbolized by the outpouring of the second vial, have a more direct reference to Christendom than to the Mohamedan empire. The Turkish power had "died in the sea"—but only for a few years did their Catholic conquerors ride triumphant.

From 1562 to 1602, i. e. during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, "the great rival powers in Europe," says Hume, "were Spain and England,"—they were also the chief maritime states. Besides this, Philip of Spain was considered the champion of Popery. He assured the Pope that "he would not suffer a single root of the noxious plant of Protestantism to remain in the Netherlands; either he would uphold the Catholic faith in all its purity, or would consent to lose those provinces altogether." Elizabeth, on the other hand, was looked up to as the head of the Protestants. "We know," says Zanchy of Strasbourg, writing to Alasco, soon after Elizabeth's accession, "we know, that if Christ's kingdom be happily established in the kingdom of England, no small aid will thence come to the other Churches dispersed through Germany, Poland, and other countries." And he was not deceived. The Queen assisted the Huguenots, now engaged in fierce warfare with the Catholic party in France; she supported the Hollanders, who were struggling for life in the clutches of the merciless and bigotted Spaniards.

England was then, as she is now, the only place of security for the poor refugee fleeing from political or religious persecution.

The Huguenots who escaped from the Bartholomew massacre in 1572, and the Netherlanders who survived the murders of Alva, were here welcomed and protected. Elizabeth was thus the bulwark of the faith—and the Pope, directing the efforts of the Catholic Princes against her, exhorted them to “lay the axe to the root of the tree.”

The wars, therefore, which raged at this period, were either on the sea, or near its shores. The English seamen ravaged the coasts, not of Spain only, but of the Spanish settlements in the New World. The Dutch, with wonderful rapidity, built ships of war, launched them with courage and success against the commerce of Spain, and intercepted her communications in all quarters.

To establish Popery in all its vigour, it became necessary to overthrow the power of England. And now, it was believed, the time had arrived for making the attempt. In 1586, the Netherlands were in great part subdued, and negotiations had commenced for the surrender of the remainder. Geneva, the early metropolis of the Protestant faith, was on the point of falling under the power of her enemies. Popery had again obtained the ascendancy in Germany; renewed attacks were made on the Huguenots; and a Catholic prince had ascended the throne of Poland.

The Pope anathematized Elizabeth, and denounced her as Jezebel; but to Philip he promised a million of scudi to assist him in his conquest of England. The powers of Italy and Spain roused themselves for the attack; the resources of the Catholic world were called into action; and the “Invincible Armada,” with 25,000 chosen troops, was fitted out for certain victory. The expedition was associated in Philip’s mind with the most brilliant prospects; especially that of universal dominion over the seas. And who could doubt of success, when they remembered the glorious sea-fight of Lepanto, only seventeen years before, when the maritime strength of the Turks was dashed to pieces by the Spanish and Italian galleys?

But the English were undismayed by the vast preparations of their enemies: their courage rose superior to their danger—their

hope was high—their faith unshaken; and, when the mighty armament of Spain approached, their bravery and skill were found more than a match for their unwieldy antagonists. The Invincible Armada fled from the conflict, but could not escape. “The angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man;” and Elizabeth gratefully acknowledged the help she had from heaven,—“Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters.”

This memorable event took place in the year 1588. The year which terminated the 1260 prophetic days of the Church's sojourning in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, as I have attempted to prove in a former Lecture. It is also well known as the *Annus Mirabilis*, the wonderful or admirable year, and noted by the German chronologers as the *grand climacterical* year of the world.*

The defeat of the Spanish Armada was not only a striking instance of the interposition of the Almighty, but a singularly exact fulfilment, in all its bearings, of the outpouring of the second vial; and we search history in vain for a more precise development of the prophetic symbols.

Truly, the Popish power in the sea “*died*,” and has never revived. England took the lead as a Protestant kingdom, and has kept it. She has obtained the dominion of the ocean, and compelled the Catholic states every where to acknowledge her supremacy. The fearless indomitable spirit which God then bestowed upon her Drakes, her Howards, her Hawkins, and her Frobishers, has des-

* See Nares' Memoirs of Lord Burghley, vol. iij. p. 327, where he states, that the “admirable year,” 1588, was said to be foretold as such by an astronomer of Koningsberg, above a hundred years before. And he adds, “that some notorious prophecy was in circulation, relative to this year, appears from a letter written from the Secretary of State's Office to Mr. Anthony Bacon, in France, June 13, 1586, in which notice is taken of the *many strange* accidents, ‘which, (says the writer) give no small credit to the old prophecy of the *approaching* year, 1588.’”

cended as an heir-loom to her sailors in each succeeding age; and her foes upon the ocean become as "dead men" before them.

With the destruction of the Armada sank the hopes and courage of the Catholic Princes. Philip of Spain was compelled to recognize the independence of the Dutch; Henry IV. ascended the throne of France, and the Huguenots obtained peace and security; while in Britain songs of thanksgiving ascended to heaven.

There the Protestants, as it were, "stood on a sea of glass mingled with fire, having the harps of God, singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb: Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; *for thy judgments are made manifest.*" Amen.

"Our trust is not in mortal hosts,
Nor in the fleets that guard our coasts;
Thine is the land, and thine the main,
And human force and skill are vain.

Forgive the follies of our times,
And purge our land from all its crimes:
Reform'd and deck'd with grace Divine,
Let princes, priests, and people shine."

LECTURE XVII.

THE POURING OUT OF THE THIRD VIAL: THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR.
—THE FOURTH VIAL: THE WARS OF LOUIS XIV.—THE FIFTH
VIAL: THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.—REVELATION XVI. 4—11.

IN the last Lecture, our attention was directed to the pouring out of the First and Second Vials. In explaining the meaning of the first, it was shewn how exactly the pouring out of the vial upon the earth was fulfilled in the wars which commenced among the European potentates in the year 1521 (soon after the Reformation), and spread through Germany, France and Spain, but especially devastated central Italy. It was the most general war which had hitherto occurred in Christendom.

The second vial poured upon the sea, had its accomplishment in the wars which distinguished the reign of Queen Elizabeth. These were chiefly confined to the sea and the sea-coasts, and in which Spain (then a great maritime power), Holland and England, were the principal actors—the grand scene being the destruction of the Spanish Armada, by which Protestantism was established, and the naval supremacy of the Popish States completely overthrown.

Verse 4. “The third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood.”

We have had frequent occasion to refer to the adaptation of the symbols in the Apocalypse to the local scenery, where, in the providence of God, the predicted events were fulfilled. And we shall find that here again the pouring out of the vial upon the “rivers and fountains of water,” so that they became blood, was most

exactly and literally fulfilled : for the rivers of Europe became the scene of God's judgments in the first half of the seventeenth century, just as the sea, during the preceding age, had been the theatre of those events, by which the vision of the pouring out of the second vial had been so accurately accomplished. The chief actors under that vial were the English and Spaniards, and their struggle for the mastery was decided on the sea. But in the battles indicated by the Third Vial, these two nations were not engaged,—though both were deeply interested. It was a struggle strictly continental, but involving principles of universal concern.

The language of the text indicates fierce and bloody wars, in those countries where European rivers either take their rise, or through which they flow ; and are therefore as clearly distinguished in the prediction, as they are in the history of the events, from those regions which formed the scene of the previous judgment. We must then look to the interior of the continent as the locality pointed out by this vial.

Of this, none need have any doubt, who are conversant with the history of Europe during the first half of the seventeenth century. Our minds naturally revert to the "Thirty years war"—which commenced in Bohemia, and ravaged, with dreadful barbarity, the whole of Germany. From 1618 to 1648 blood flowed incessantly. The Danube, the Rhine, the Elbe, the Elster, the Weser, and their tributary streams, were successively the theatre of the most sanguinary battles ; and throughout the vast extent of the inland portions of the continent, almost every fountain and rivulet was dyed with the blood of the slain. "The thirty years war," says Schiller, "from the interior of Bohemia to the mouth of the Scheldt, from the banks of the Po, to the coasts of the Baltic, desolated countries, destroyed the harvests, and laid towns and villages in ashes—a war in which 300,000 combatants sacrificed their lives—extinguished during half a century, the rising progress of civilization in Germany—and reduced the improving manners of the people to their pristine barbarism." "The flames of devastation from Bohemia, Moravia, and Austria, extended to Germany

and France. Misery rose to its highest pitch. The fields lay waste and uncultivated. The towns groaned under the licentiousness of the soldiers who garrisoned them. To the miseries of war were added famine and plague, more fatal than the sword. All the bonds of social life were dissolved in the universal confusion. The respect for order, the fear of the laws, the purity of morals and of religion, were lost under the weight of an iron sceptre. Anarchy and impurity disdained every law, and men became ferocious according as their country was wasted. The soldiers reigned,—and that most brutal of despots often made his superiors experience his power.”* In one campaign, the whole of Saxony was devoted to fire and sword: and, in another, the Electorate of Bavaria experienced a similar fate. The despairing inhabitants fled in crowds to the camp of their oppressors; and in 1648, General Grönsfeld wrote to the Elector Maximilian, that with the Imperial armies “there were certainly more than 180,000 men, women and children, who all must live as well as the soldiers. Provisions were distributed for 40,000 every twenty-four hours; how the remaining 140,000 persons were to live, passed his comprehension—there was not a single place where even the soldiers could buy any thing.” “Some historians reckon that the half, and others that two-thirds of the population of Germany perished in the ‘Thirty years’ war.’ In Saxony alone, within two years, 900,000 men were destroyed. Thousands of villages lay in ashes; and after the war, a person might, in many parts of Germany, go fifty miles, in almost any direction, without meeting a single man, a head of cattle, or a sparrow.” The ruins of many of the deserted villages are still met with in the forests at the present day.

Surely the wars rising out of the French Revolution, never produced such wide-spread and deep-seated misery as this!—and never in the history of nations could it with more propriety have been said, “Thou hast given them blood to drink.”

And yet it is singular, that Elliott and other writers refer this

* See Schiller's History of the Thirty years' war.

vial to the times of Buonaparte; and not only so, but include within that period, i. e., from 1789 to 1815, the whole of the events predicted under the first five vials. I have already stated, that this has arisen from a belief that the Turkish woe did not terminate till the middle of the eighteenth century—but every one acquainted with history must admit, that the evils inflicted on Europe by the Turks, were as slight, when compared with her intestine troubles, as is the sting of a nettle to the bite of a serpent.

The "Thirty years' war" was emphatically a religious war. It has been described as "the only regular stand-up fight between the two leading forms of Christianity—Popery and Protestantism." In that age, mutual concession and toleration were denounced by each party as *sinful*:—and it must be confessed, that Protestants were quite as ready to "take the sword" as their opponents. Few among them seemed to know what manner of spirit ought to characterize the followers of the Lamb. And yet, with an inconsistency and fatuity almost incredible, the Protestants, in their hour of peril, quarrelled with each other, and bitter hostility usurped the place of brotherly love. "The Elector of Saxony set his theologians to prove that the Lutherans were more nearly allied to the Catholics than to the Calvinists, and lent assistance to the Emperor for the suppression of religious freedom in Bohemia."

Indeed the majority of those who had been rescued from the bondage of Rome, could not appreciate that glorious liberty of thought—one of the great blessings conferred by the Gospel. They rested satisfied with their name and their creed—and their foolish hearts became darkened. Like the Jews on their return from the Babylonish Captivity, who forgot their gracious Deliverer, and neglected for many years the re-building of his holy temple—until the "Lord smote them with blasting and mildew and hail:" (Haggai ii. 17.)—So the Protestants turned their liberty into licentiousness; and that "spiritual house," built of "lively stones," where they might "offer up spiritual sacrifices to God," remained unfinished and despised. They cared, like the Jews, only for the temporal advantages which the Gospel procured; and of these the chastisements of the Almighty soon deprived them.

Judgment began at the house of God—in Bohemia, where the light of truth had long shone, and where Protestantism had struck deep root. Persecution spread through all the Imperial dominions, and the Protestant Princes of Germany, unable to resist the Emperor, in consequence of their disunion and apathy, were threatened with Romanism or with ruin. But God restrained the fury of the oppressor. In the hour of their utmost need, he sent them deliverance. For though he had chastised his people, because they had neglected to improve their privileges, and had dishonoured that holy name by which they were called, yet would he not make a full end of them, nor permit the enemy to triumph in their destruction.

The chosen instrument of God for the deliverance of the Church in Germany was Gustavus, the king of Sweden. And he seemed to feel that God had indeed called him to the work. "It is a king's duty and his religion both," he said to his counsellors, "to obey the great Sovereign of kings without a murmur." "God is my witness, that *I* have not sought the contest. But the Emperor has supported my enemies, persecuted my friends and brethren, trampled my religion in the dust, and stretched out his ambitious hand to grasp my crown. The oppressed States of Germany call loudly to us for aid, and by the help of God it *shall* be afforded them." "I feel a presentiment," he added, "that I shall die in defence of my country and religion. I commend you then to the protection of Heaven. Be just, be conscientious, act uprightly, and we shall meet again in eternity." With nobler sentiments a king never went to war.

This was in the year 1629—after twelve of the "thirty years' war" had elapsed. At that time the Catholics were every where victorious, and the Protestants of Germany lay at their feet, crushed, timid, and apparently without hope. Gustavus landed in Germany with 15,000 men, while the Emperor had in the field not less than 150,000, besides those in garrison. The Protestant Princes, from whom the King of Sweden might naturally have expected assistance, at first refused to co-operate with him. But he knew neither fear nor hesitation. He rolled back the tide of war

from the shores of the Baltic to the centre of Germany, and "inflicted," says the Pope's legate, "enormous blows on the Catholic religion, its temples, and its altars." "By his victories, the strength of the Austrian monarchy was exhausted, the country ruined, and its armies diminished. The Emperor's allies were disarmed, and their fidelity shaken." "And after so many splendid victories, (adds Schiller) and great conquests, and so much unnecessary effusion of blood, the Austrian monarch was himself plunged into an abyss which threatened him with ruin." After the lamented death of the renowned Gustavus on the field of Lutzen, his generals carried on the war with courage and success, to the very gates of Vienna; and the humbled and chastened Catholic Princes were compelled to subscribe the treaty of Munster in 1648. It was then that the religious boundaries of Europe were settled; and the vial poured out "upon the rivers and fountains of waters," at length was stayed.

"And I heard," says St. John, "the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

The commentators who look for the fulfilment of this vial in one of the phases of the great French Revolution, consider the blood of the saints, which is described here as so signally avenged, to be that of the Waldenses, who were slaughtered before the Reformation, and that of the Bohemian Brethren, who were so cruelly persecuted in 1620 by "the bloody house of Austria." But it is surely more consistent with the "righteous judgments" of God, to believe that the predicted punishment fell on the *actors* in that fearful Bohemian tragedy, rather than on their descendants in the sixth generation, who lived in the days of Buonaparte. Elliott himself, who endeavours to prove that none of the vials were poured out until the commencement of the French Revolution, says, in this part of his work,—“We can surely scarce err in regarding the cruelties to Christ's saints in centuries preceding, as

(in part at least) the cause of the retribution; agreeably with God's frequent method of deferring judgment for sin to a later generation."* Surely we should err in supposing this to be God's "frequent method." He hath declared, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father," (Ezek. xviii. 20); except in the case of such a generation as the Jews, who "filled up the measure of their fathers;" and therefore "upon them came all the righteous blood shed upon the earth." But we dare not use this language, when speaking of the late generation of Austrians. I think, indeed, that a careful examination of history will lead to this conclusion, that national persecutions generally meet with national punishments, during the lifetime of the persecuting generation; and so also of other national sins. Now, the generation that lived during the "thirty years' war," was notorious for its persecuting spirit;† and a more fierce and bigotted devotee than the chief persecutor, the Emperor Ferdinand the Second, never wielded a sceptre. The Princes of Austria had ever been the pillars of Popery,‡ and endeavoured by fire and sword to extirpate Protestantism; for that alone prevented their attaining to universal monarchy. But Ferdinand excelled all his race in cruelty, (as is shewn by the author of the "Reformation and Anti-Reformation in Bohemia.") Before he attained the empire, he had extirpated the Protestant religion in his territories of Gratz. "After the battle of Prague, oppression extended to the whole kingdom of Bohemia, and soon after to the

* Horæ Apoc. iii. p. 1088.

† A great change took place in Germany after the war. "It produced," says a popular writer, "a thorough social toleration in matters of religion. No one was afterwards inclined to taunt or abuse another on account of difference of opinion or form of worship."

‡ Among many other savage enactments of the Austrian Princes, the following is remarkable for its cruelty:—By an edict of the Emperor Frederic II., in the 13th century, heretics were condemned to the *fire*; but it was allowed to the Bishops to shew mercy where they thought proper, "provided the *tongues of those who should be pardoned were cut out*, so that they might not again blaspheme."—*Dr. McCrie's Italy*, p. 6.

whole empire, from both which the Protestants were expelled." Ferdinand remembered his religious duties, and the vow which he made to the Virgin at Loretto, of increasing her dominions by oppressing the Protestants. "The sufferings of Bohemia (says Schiller) were beyond description severe. The towns were reduced to half their number at the beginning of Ferdinand's reign. Of 34,700 villages only about 6,000 remained. The population sank from about 3,000,000 to 700,000." "It is scarcely possible, (says a Catholic writer) to find in history another instance of a whole nation so completely changed in the space of about fifteen years. In 1620, except a few nobles and monks, *all were Protestants*. But at the death of Ferdinand, it was, to all appearance, *entirely Catholic*." The merit of the conversion was claimed by the Jesuits. They boasted of it in the presence of the Pope. But the Capuchin, Valerius Magnus, exclaimed, "Holy Father, give me *soldiers* as they were given to the Jesuits, and I will convert the whole world to the Catholic faith."*

Without referring to persecutions in other parts of the empire, or to the awful massacre at Magdeburg, by the Imperialists under Tilly, "which had no parallel since the destruction of Troy or Jerusalem," we may perceive, by the extirpation of Protestantism in Bohemia, how the "blood of saints and prophets was shed;" and when we contemplate the scenes of retribution, who can refrain from joining in the exclamation of the angel, "Even so, Lord God Almighty; true and righteous are thy judgments"?

Verses 8 and 9. "The fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory."

The sun is used as an emblem of authority and power, not only in the Apocalypse, but in other places of Scripture, (see Genesis xxxvii. 9.) It was so used when the fourth trumpet sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten; which, as has been shewn,

* "Reformation and Anti-Reformation in Bohemia," vol. ii. p. 114.

prefigured the extinction of the Imperial power in the western Roman empire. The sun is not said to be darkened by the effects of the fourth vial, though doubtless that also is implied; but *scorching heat* was produced, so that men blasphemed the name of God. We may therefore expect to find, that the potentates of Europe, symbolized by the sun, were excited to ungovernable pride and ambition, leading to sanguinary wars, whereby their subjects were reduced to great misery and distress, but without producing any reformation of life.

Following the chronological order of events, after the conclusion of the thirty years' war, we find the character of the contests in which the nations are now engaged, to be completely changed. It is no more a religious feeling that animates the combatants; but the madness of the kings of France, Spain, Austria, and Prussia, which, from 1650 to 1763, left the nations of Europe little repose; and, as is not unusually the case, God made his enemies crush and weaken one another. In the war of the Spanish succession, both Spain and Austria were scorched by France; and in the seven years' war, Prussia acquired great accessions of territory and influence, but at an enormous expense of blood and treasure. These wars ran like fire from one end of the continent to the other, and their withering influence on the people is described by every historian. In these wars, too, the "great heat" of gunpowder was first experienced in all its intensity. In the thirty years' war, the pike and the sword had as great a share in the combat as the musket; and the artillery was very inefficient. A great change now took place in these respects; and battles were thenceforth decided without defensive armour, and by those "fiery streams," alike irresistible and destructive. The bombardment of towns and cities also frequently occurred in these wars; "and we may see," says Fleming,* "how properly the scorching and burning of men from above (as if the sun had sent down fire and heat from his own body,) is made use of to characterize the time of this vial."

* "Rise and Fall of Rome Papal," p. 73.

The people suffered for the madness of the Princes. But the Prince by whose madness not only his own people but all the neighbouring nations suffered most intensely, was Louis XIV. of France. Indeed some commentators have thought that he is particularly indicated by the sun in this vial. He "took the sun for his emblem,"* and was truly the greatest and most resplendent of the European sovereigns during that period. His reign was the brightest era of the French monarchy. "Louis," says a French author, "was born with an ideal of royalty altogether Asiatic:"—but unfortunately, his bigotry was equal to his despotism, and he resolved to suppress Protestantism in his kingdom. The extirpation of heresy was indeed one of the articles in his marriage contract with the daughter of the king of Spain. The Calvinists in France soon felt the scorching fire of persecution. Decree after decree Louis issued against them; and two millions of his subjects were virtually put beyond the pale of the laws, denied liberty of conscience at home, and yet prohibited, on pain of death, from going into exile. The crowning act of persecution was the employment of the famous *dragonnades*—troops of dragoons, charged with the conversion of the Protestants to the Catholic faith. The most savage cruelties were practised by these licentious and brutal soldiers, and thousands of their victims "resisted unto blood, striving against sin." "But the terrified people were sometimes converted by unanimous acclamations," says a French historian, "and *conversion offices* were established, where, after the names of the converts were inscribed, there was delivered to them a certificate, on the back of a playing card, which was to protect them from the soldiery. The people of Nismes called this card the *mark of the beast*—the expression of a profound truth; for what else is a man, who to preserve his animal and mortal being, abdicates his thought, his soul,

* Fleming, who wrote in 1701, says, "The French king takes the sun for his emblem, and this for his motto, *nec pluribus impar*; he may, at length, or rather his successors, and the monarchy itself (at least before the year 1794) be forced to acknowledge, that (in respect to neighbouring potentates) he is even *singulis impar*."

his celestial and immortal nature?" This savage mode of conversion was speedily followed by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (in 1685)—which deprived the Protestants of the last shadow of toleration, and stamped the character of the king with lasting infamy.

All assemblies of the Huguenots for divine service were now prohibited, and the clergy who refused to apostatize were ordered to quit France within fifteen days on pain of being sent to the galleys. 1,500 clergymen left the country—and 500,000 of the people followed their pastors into exile. Every where they were welcomed: subscriptions were raised for their relief, and residences provided for them. In London, Berlin, and Amsterdam whole streets were occupied by the emigrants. Nor was the hospitality with which they were treated without a recompense. These men were the true nobility of the land from whence they had been driven, and proved a blessing to the lands of their adoption; for they carried with them high literary attainments, activity and industry, and great skill in many branches of manufacture which France had hitherto monopolised.

But Louis XIV., not satisfied with suppressing Protestantism in his own dominions, was resolved to make "France the world, and to install the Roman Catholic religion in a black and bloody predominance." He had attempted the subjugation of Holland, but was foiled by the heroism of the Dutch under the Prince of Orange; and forced to resign all his conquests in Flanders, by the treaty of Ryswick, in 1697. He still continued, however, to scorch the nations, and increased in power and brilliancy; until England, in the reign of Queen Anne, engaged in the contest, and gave the command of her armies to the Duke of Marlborough.

"The king of France was then (says Alison) blazing in the zenith of his power and success," and "he formed the centre of a galaxy of glory of almost every description of military, political and intellectual distinction. Unbroken good fortune had attended all his enterprises since he had launched into the career of foreign aggrandisement." But the Lord said, Hitherto shalt thou come and no further. Marlborough was raised up by Providence to humble the pride of France, and to rescue the liberties of Europe

from her thralldom. "He was the champion of Protestantism in its tremendous encounter with Popery, of which Louis XIV. was the worthy and formidable exponent." The decisive blow at Blenheim (1704) destroyed at once the vast fabric of power which it had taken him so long to construct. He found himself stripped of all his conquests—shorn of his glory and influence—and he sued for peace! The sun which had so long "scorched men with fire," was now darkened by the dregs of the vial.

But the fiery ordeal through which the nations had passed did not teach them righteousness—for it is added, in the text, "men blasphemed the name of God," and "repented not to give him glory." Does not this blasphemy refer to the spread of infidelity throughout Europe?—the denial of his over-ruling and controlling Providence in all the events and judgments which take place in the world,—as He who alone hath "power over these plagues?" It was, in fact, during this very period, that the principal Atheistical and Deistical authors flourished, and their doctrines spread far and wide. Truly God's name *was* blasphemed during the pouring out of the fourth vial, and men, though suffering, "repented not." The evil grew greater and greater—and its awful results were strikingly exhibited in the judgments under the fifth vial.

Verses 10, 11. "And the fifth angel poured out his vial on the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

"The *seat of the beast*" is not St. Peter's patrimony, or the city of Rome merely, as some have supposed,—*that* place is the "seven mountains on which the *woman* sitteth." The beast is not identical with the woman, as I have already shewn. The *woman* "is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" and these kings reign over "the nations and peoples and tongues," which, in their aggregate, form the *body of the beast*,—once united as an Empire under one head, but of which the kings are now described in the Apocalypse as the *horns*. The "seat of the beast," therefore, strictly speaking, must mean those *countries* where the nations dwell which form the body of the beast; or the capital cities, the

seats of Government in each of those kingdoms. The city of Rome is one of those seats—for the Pope, as a temporal prince, is one of the horns of the beast, “the little horn,” of whom the prophet Daniel spake.

Bearing this explanation in mind, we shall at once perceive the force and propriety of the symbolical language used to describe the outpouring of this vial, when applied to the French Revolution and the reign of Bonaparte. During that awful visitation, from 1789 to 1815, every country of Europe felt the scourge of war. Every *capital*, almost every city on the continent, beheld the foe within its gates. Paris first, in the hands of demons in human form, saw its government overthrown, its king beheaded, its streets deluged with blood. The cup of trembling was afterwards presented successively to the Princes of Europe, and a haughty conqueror compelled them to drink it to the dregs. Rome was taken by the French, and the Pope imprisoned. Vienna, Berlin, Madrid, Lisbon, Amsterdam, Dresden, Munich, Bern, Turin, Naples and Venice, even Warsaw and the distant Moscow in the north, as well as Cairo and Alexandria in the east, were filled with foreign troops. Copenhagen was bombarded, and Stockholm saw a French Marshal sitting as King within her walls.

Truly this vial was poured out on the seat of the Beast. The infidelity and neology which had spread throughout the Protestant States on the continent, rendered them equally obnoxious to the righteous judgments of God, with the Roman Catholic kingdoms. Thus the seat of the Beast, in all its amplitude, became the theatre of the events predicted by the fifth vial.—“And his kingdom was *full of darkness*.” Darkness, both spiritual and political, prevailed. The pure light of God’s word was well nigh extinguished in places where it once shone brightly—and even the tapers of superstition were expiring in their sockets. The Popish priests were proscribed in France, their altars overthrown, and their churches desecrated. Men everywhere threw off the trammels of superstition,—but without embracing the liberty of the Gospel. The Spiritual Head of the Beast was in bondage, and darkness that might be felt covered the earth.

There was only one bright spot. As in the days of Moses, while the Egyptians were enveloped in thick darkness, the Israelites in the land of Goshen had light in all their dwellings; so, during the moral and political darkness in Europe, there was one land that enjoyed light and liberty. England "gave the glory to God,"—and he preserved her from the yoke of Napoleon. In times of trial and affliction she sought the Lord with fasting and prayer,—and no enemy was permitted to set his foot on her shores. Her fleets rode triumphant on every sea, and her enemies "became as dead men" before them. She alone scorned and defied the conqueror of Europe, and sent her warlike sons to break the chains of the struggling nations.

Her light, instead of waning, waxed brighter and brighter—she grew greater in dominion and strength, and in her ennobling and sublime institutions. Her Missionary and her Bible Societies, which sprang into existence in the midst of revolution and war, not only gloriously illuminated her own land, but pierced the gloom in which the neighbouring regions were enveloped. These lights still shine, and will continue to shine, with sun-like power, until they make "the circuit of the earth" and there be "no speech nor language where their voice is not heard."

But the kingdoms were "full of darkness," politically as well as spiritually. Some of their suns were extinguished, all were eclipsed. The king of Sardinia was removed, and the king of Naples expelled—Prussia was overthrown, and half the dominions of her king swept away,—the Republic of Venice ceased to exist,—the sovereigns of Holland and Portugal fled,—the king of Spain abdicated. Napoleon compelled the Emperor of Germany to renounce the title of "Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire," which, as the sixth head of the Beast, he had held since the days of Charlemagne, for above 1000 years; and thus, says a popular commentator, "The imperial sun of Christendom was literally extinguished." The Emperor of the French, then, became the seventh head of the Beast—of whom it was predicted, "when he cometh, he must continue a short space." This also was most literally fulfilled. He reigned only a few years. But short as was his

space, he gave most unequivocal proofs of his Headship.* He shewed himself the most complete creator and extinguisher of political suns and stars that ever appeared on the stage of the world. His brother Jerome he made king of Westphalia,—his brother Louis king of Holland,—he made his brother Joseph king of Spain,—his brother-in-law Murat king of Naples,—his general Bernadotte became king of Sweden,—and he proclaimed his son king of Rome: ancient dynasties were overthrown, new ones were created,—and between 1806 and 1818, more kings were made and unmade than ever in the whole history of Christendom before.

With these facts before us, proving the moral and political darkness of Europe during the period of this vial, the meaning of the next clause is obvious:—"They gnawed their tongues for pain." The princes were bound to Napoleon's chariot wheels, and dared not give utterance to their swelling indignation—the people, torn from their native soil, were compelled to fight his battles in foreign lands. To refuse, was to be covered with a dress of infamy, to be sent to the prisons, and to be loaded with chains. But Buonaparte and his army were also doomed in their turn, to endure the same sensation of gnawing pain. In his retreat from Acre, he experienced a foretaste of that galling and painful humiliation—of that bitter potion which he and his followers drained to the dregs, in the ever memorable and most disastrous retreat from Moscow, and in the succeeding reverses, which terminated in the total overthrow of his empire at Waterloo, and his hopeless captivity on a sea-girt rock—while humbled France was compelled to restore the precious treasures that the conqueror had collected to adorn her capital; and she still chews the cud of bitter grief and indignation, because *Ichabod* was written on all his glory.

* He claimed the right to revoke Charlemagne's donations to the Holy See, as himself the successor and representative of Charlemagne. He decreed the annexation of the duchies of Urbino, Ancona, Macrata, and Camarino, for ever to his kingdom of Italy; the total and final abolition of the Pope's temporal authority; and incorporation of Rome, as its second city, in the French empire.—See *Scott's Life of Buonaparte, People's edit.*, p. 509.

And what was the final result of all these wondrous changes and fearful sufferings among the continental States? We read, "They blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

Infidelity and neology among so-called Protestants—idolatry and superstition among Roman Catholics, remained as before. There was no national repentance—no turning humbly to "the God of Heaven." "In Germany, after the revolutionary wars, (writes one well acquainted with the country) morality became utterly stagnant." In France the Bourbons dedicated their kingdom to the Virgin Mary. In Spain "the priests were the chief corruptors of the people." Superstition increased; miracles were wrought throughout Italy. The Pope, on his restoration, crowned a miraculous wooden image, and attached a plenary indulgence to all who should devoutly pray to it. He still retained the old persecuting spirit, and denounced Bible Societies, as "corrupting the holy Scriptures," and disseminating "the Gospel of the Devil!" So that the same blasphemy against God which had prevailed before the out-pouring of the fifth vial, still continued after it had passed away. But it is written, "He that being often reprovèd and hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Judgment and admonition have alike failed in producing reformation. Again and again have the words been uttered—"They repented not,"—and now, in the passage before us, they are recorded for the last time, as if long-suffering were nearly exhausted, and the Spirit about to cease from striving with man. Symptoms of the coming end are multiplying around us, and present events concur with ancient predictions, in pointing to an approaching and final struggle—when God indeed will be again blasphemed—but "repentance shall be hid from his eyes;" for the voice from heaven shall then be heard saying, "*It is done.*"

"Then let thy wrath, O Lord of Hosts! consume
The towers of darkness, and the demons' shrine,
Till Truth's broad sun, triumphant, shall illumè
Earth's wide waste wilderness with beams divine,
And man shall bend to Thee, and own no name but Thine."

LECTURE XVIII.

REMARKS ON THE PERIODS OF THE FIRST FIVE VIALS.—THE SIXTH VIAL.—DRYING UP OF THE EUPHRATES, NOT THE OVERTHROW OF TURKEY.—REMOVAL OF OBSTRUCTIONS TO THE PROGRESS OF THE GOSPEL IN THE EAST, AMONG MOHAMEDANS, HINDOOS, CHINESE, ETC.—THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS LIKE FROGS: INFIDELITY, DESPOTISM, SUPERSTITION.—THE GATHERING OF THE ARMIES.—ARMAGEDDON.—THE WARNING.—REVELATION XVI. 12—16.

“AND the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armagedden.” —Rev. xvi. 12—16.

While endeavouring in previous Lectures to explain the meaning of the first five vials, I alluded more than once to the opinion of some able commentators, that the time of their pouring out is confined to the short period of the French Revolution and the reign of Buonaparte. I shewed also the inconsistency of this theory with the order and distinctness which are acknowledged to be characteristic of the foregoing portions of this mysterious book. For not only do these commentators leave above 250 years of the

important history of Christendom a mere blank, as it were in the Apocalypse, but by confining the action of the five vials within the space of about twenty years, they destroy their individuality, and produce confusion instead of order.

This is not very readily perceived in reading Mr. Elliott's great work on the Apocalypse, unless attention be paid to the dates of the events. Thus the first vial, according to his scheme, began to be poured out in the year 1789 and ended in.....1800.

The second commenced in 1792 and terminated in 1815.

The third vial began in.....1792 and ended in.....1805.

The fourth commenced in....1806 and closed in.....1809.

The fifth began in.....1789 and ended in.....1814.

Now it seems evident, by this confusing and transposing of dates, that the history is used to suit the theory, not to explain the prophecy;—and that the theory is not in accordance with the order in which the vials are mentioned in the Revelation. There, the pouring out of one is succeeded, on its termination, by the pouring out of a second, and so on; but in the theory I have referred to, four of the five vials are described as actually pouring out at one and the same time. Now we know that the Spirit of God is not the author of confusion, and we cannot believe that it is intended in this instance. For nothing is more manifest in the study of the Apocalypse, than the clearness and distinctness observable in the opening of the seals, and in the sounding of the trumpets (which Elliott himself points out); and therefore, we may conclude, in the pouring out of the vials also, and consequently in the consecutiveness of the events to which they refer.* This law of the Revelation (as it may be termed) has ever been present to my mind, and produced conviction of its applicability in the present case. But our proximity to the time and intimate acquaintance with the actors in the stirring scenes of the last sixty years, have invested them with an undue importance, and given them a prominence in

* Indeed, Elliott himself says, (vol. iii. p. 1076): "In the Apocalyptic Vial out-pourings, one quickly *followed* another." But he seems to have forgotten his own dates.

the eyes of many, tending to diminish and overshadow those equally great but more distant events, which I have already brought forward as the fulfilment of the first four vials.

The fifth vial, which had its accomplishment in the convulsions arising out of the French Revolution, formed the concluding portion of our last Lecture.

The sixth vial, to which our attention is now directed, seems to be fulfilling in the present day. It points to the regions of the East, beyond the boundaries of Romanism. This vial appears to be more complicated in its action than those which have gone before it. It consists of three distinct parts,—1st, The preparation for “the way of the kings of the East.”—2d, The preparation for the battle of Armageddon,—and 3d, The preparation required of the Church in anticipation of that event.

The kings of the East have been supposed by some to signify the Jews; and the drying-up of the Euphrates, the removal of all those obstructions which hinder their return to the Holy Land. But this is an untenable theory. For the “outcasts of Israel,” and the “dispersed of Judah,” shall be gathered together, not from the East or sun-rising merely, to which this vision has a special reference, but from the “four corners of the earth.” Besides, we are assured that they shall, as a nation, remain in their present condition, “until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in,”—when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea; and then, saith Isaiah (xi. 11), “In that day shall the Lord set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people.” But the pouring out of this vial indicates the preparation for the coming in of the Gentiles, which from many prophecies, besides that I have quoted, must precede the restoration of Israel.

Other interpretations of the kings of the East, and of the drying up of the Euphrates, are to be found in the writings of ancient and modern expounders of prophecy; but the most generally received in the present day is that which refers the “drying up” to the diminution or crumbling away of the Turkish empire, and the consequent removal of a great obstruction to the conversion of

the nations of the East. And certainly the history of the Turks, during the last thirty years, seems in some degree to justify the interpretation.

During the progress of the revolutionary wars in Europe, the Ottoman power remained comparatively uninjured. And in the year 1802, a commentator, (Galloway) on the passage before us, expresses his wonder how the Turkish empire shall be reduced to the helpless state which he thinks is here indicated. "Perhaps," he says, "the means will remain concealed, till the events themselves shall remove the veil." "In the year 1820 (says the Annual Register) the Ottoman empire found itself freed at once from foreign war and domestic rebellion." But before the year expired, the scene was changed. In the summer of that year, Ali Pacha of Yanina raised the standard of rebellion, and asserted his independence; his revolt precipitated the Greek insurrection, which quickly extended to the Egean isles, to northern Greece and Thessaly. In the following year, the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia rebelled,—and in 1821 and 1822, the Asiatic Provinces of Turkey were overrun by the Persians. In attempting to re-conquer the Greeks, the Turks lost 30,000 men in 1823; and when in 1827, the Egyptians came to their assistance, and nearly completed the subjugation of the Morea, the ships of England interposed, and at the battle of Navarino, not only saved Greece, but by the destruction of the Turkish fleet prepared the way for the further humiliation of that devoted empire. Not only was the strength of the Turks weakened by revolt and foreign war, but in 1826, by the massacre of 30,000 Janizaries, their bravest troops, their power was still further reduced by their own act and deed. Then followed the war with the Russians, who in 1829 crossed the Balkan, took Adrianople, and threatened Constantinople itself. Peace, however, was made, but the empire towards the north was dried up to the Danube. In the same year, the French seized upon Algiers, and cut off another source of the Turkish strength. Then followed the rebellion of Mehemet Ali, the Pacha of Egypt, who, after asserting his independence, and defeating the Sultan's armies, was prevented from subverting the empire only by the interposition of

the European powers. Egypt is now a nominal province of the empire.

But Turkey is said to be drying up by the diminution of its population, as well as by the loss of its provinces. There is no increase among the Mussulmans. They have been silently wasting away; and travellers have remarked, that ere long Turkey will cease to exist for want of Turks. They are not supposed at present to amount to more than three millions, while their Greek and other Christian subjects number at least twelve millions. Earthquake, famine and pestilence, have also fearfully added to the disasters of the empire during the last thirty years—while the plague is continually active though not always alarming. “By fire, pestilence, and civil commotion (says the chaplain to the British embassy), Constantinople itself has lost more than half its population within twenty years.” The alleged drying up has been going on with great rapidity; and it has been frequently remarked, “that nothing supports what remains of the once mighty power of Turkey, but the policy of the Princes of Christendom.” How long that policy will remain conservative, is now doubtful,* and a few weeks or months may see Russia driving the remnant of the Turks back to their ancient encampments beyond the Euphrates.†

Expositors have indeed calculated the “hour, month, day, and year” of the existence of the Turkish empire. Some fixed on the

* This was written before France and England determined to resist the unjustifiable aggression of Russia. Since the beginning of the war, Turkey herself has exhibited more strength and courage than was anticipated by either friend or foe; and her “drying up” has become a less probable event than before.

† Elliott relates a curious prophecy which he had heard himself at Constantinople in 1819, as a common subject of talk in the Turkish coffee houses:—It was to this effect—that the Moslem crescent would be forced back in the latter days, from Constantinople, first to Brusa, and thence to Damascus, and that it would there continue waning till the end of the world. *Hor. Apoc. p. 1349.*

year 1844, and one of great authority as an interpreter, gave 1849 as the "fated epoch" of the total drying up of the Turks from off the territory of Greek Christendom. Those periods have passed away, and Turkey still exists, shewing the fallacy of man's calculations, and the foolishness of attempting to make prophecy subservient to preconceived theories.

Its downfall indeed is said to be only a question of time; but whether that time be long or short, the event alone will shew.

The passage before us, however, seems not to be predictive of Turkey's overthrow. And the occupation of the country by Russia at the present moment, would not, so far as we can see, further the apparent designs of the Almighty, as indicated in the prophecy; viz., the "preparing of the way of the kings from the East," in whatever light we may view that expression.* Neither would the violent destruction of the empire by war, agree with the meaning of the symbol which is here employed—for the drying up of the Euphrates indicates a gradual wasting away or extinction, not a forcible disruption.

This leads me to another view of the subject which, I believe, has not hitherto been mentioned. While the physical and political power of Turkey has been gradually diminishing since 1820, so also has her religious bigotry and intolerance. "During the last thirty years," says Lord Beaumont, "a gradual revolution has been taking place: one by one, every law or custom which tended to oppress the rayah, or keep up the barbarous privileges of feudalism, has been abrogated or repealed." Aware of their inability to contend against the powers of Europe, the Turks have been led to make concessions to the "Christian dogs," which would have been spurned by their fathers. A Protestant Bishop is now recognised by them in Jerusalem; they have permitted the Jews to build a synagogue on Mount Zion; and they have mitigated the

* Lord Shaftesbury lately observed, "There is a far greater degree of religious freedom in Turkey than in Russia: the whole aim of the latter power is to darken all that is light, and to subjugate all that is free."

severity of the law which awarded death as the punishment of apostasy from the Mohammedan faith,—thus sapping the very foundation of their creed. Indeed, it seems more probable, from recent events, that the Turkish religion will be changed, than that the empire will be overthrown. Other proofs of Turkish tolerance might be adduced.* I will mention only one. From the capture of Constantinople in 1453, the Greek Patriarch had been compelled to receive his investiture from the Sultan: but since 1820, this humiliating ceremony has not been repeated.

The removal of these obstructions to the profession and the dissemination of the Christian religion throughout the Turkish empire, has led me to consider more attentively, the meaning of the pouring out of the vial “upon the great river Euphrates.” It has almost universally been taken for granted, that the Euphrates symbolizes the Turkish power. But I can find no sufficient authority for such an assumption. The “drying up,” by the outpouring of the vial, reminds us of the drying up of the literal Euphrates by Cyrus (the Persian), by which the way was prepared for the capture of Babylon, and the ultimate deliverance of God’s chosen people from the land of their captivity. These events had been predicted by Isaiah and Jeremiah. They were significant of the removal of great obstacles in the way of the accomplishment of Jehovah’s purposes towards his ancient Church, and the overthrow of her great oppressor. And may not the drying up of the mystical Euphrates have reference to the removal of obstructions in the way of the development of the Church in Papal and Pagan, as well as in Mohammedan countries?

But the text seems to limit our inquiries to the East, for it is to be a preparation of the way “for the kings from the rising of the sun.”

* The Turkish Bible is now (1855) sold openly in Constantinople, and eagerly read by Mohammedans of all classes. “I am a Turk; nevertheless I continually read the Bible,”—said a respectable Turk to the Rev. Mr. Barker a short time ago.

In the other passage of the Apocalypse, where the Euphrates is named (ix. 14), four angels are loosed who had been bound in it (or by it). Nearly all expositors are agreed in considering these four angels as representatives of the Turks who burst into the Roman empire, where they have now been established for 800 years. The Euphrates for some time formed a barrier to their progress, which at length they overcame. That great river, was, in fact, the boundary of the Roman empire. It was especially so in the days of St. John. It was more—it had been the eastern boundary of the Israelitish monarchy ; and until the establishment of the Ottoman power, was ever considered as the separating line between barbarism and civilization. But the Turks who passed the river, ought never to be considered as symbolized by the river itself. Nor are they ever so considered by any commentator while expounding the meaning of the sixth trumpet. In that vision, the four angels and the horsemen are justly viewed as representatives of the Turks. It is therefore surprising to find in the explanation of the sixth vial, an entirely new meaning given to the symbol of the river. In the former vision it is made to signify the obstruction which the Turks overcame : in the latter it is interpreted as signifying the Turks themselves. This mode of treating the Apocalyptic symbols is arbitrary and unreasonable, as well as unauthorised by Scripture usage. How can the representation of an obstruction in one place be converted into the power which removes the obstruction in another ?

We may, therefore, legitimately consider the Euphrates, not as signifying the Turks, but as denoting the line of separation between Christianity and every false religion in the East. Even as it was the promised eastern boundary of the territory of God's ancient people, and, in the days of David and Solomon, separated them from their idolatrous neighbours. The Euphrates may thus typically represent the many obstacles which have hitherto opposed the spread of the Gospel, in the regions towards the sun-rising. When they are removed—when the mystical Euphrates is dried up—the glad tidings of salvation will spread as easily and as

rapidly, as the troops of Cyrus spread themselves through the streets of Babylon, on that memorable night, when they entered it by the dry bed of the river: and we may believe that the Gospel will meet with less opposition than the Turks, when they crossed the literal boundary, and founded an empire within the borders of civilization.

The Turkish empire has diminished, as we have seen, in extent and power; and so also have the many obstacles in that land, which formerly stood in the way of Christianity.

Let us look at other Eastern countries. Every where we find that the Crescent is waning before the Cross. This is the opinion of Mohammedans themselves throughout the East, and has lately been expressed on several occasions to British officers by the natives of conquered districts. The moral effects of such a belief on their patriotism and their courage, if not on their religious feelings, must be very enervating. It must tend also to diminish their bigotry against the professors of Christianity. Their prejudices indeed are wearing away; and this, combined with their fear and admiration of Europeans, has paved the way for the entrance of the Gospel into many Mohammedan states. Indeed there is scarcely a country in the East in which the Bible and the Missionary are not to be found. This of itself may be reasonably adduced as a striking illustration of the drying-up of the river Euphrates, that "the way of the kings of the East" for the reception of the Gospel, may be prepared. Especially when we remember for how many centuries the religion of Mohammed presented to Christendom a very extended but impenetrable barrier.

The recession of the present eastern boundary of Russia may also be included in the symbol. The destruction of her influence on the Persian frontier, and throughout Tartary, would be the removal of a mighty obstacle in the way of real civilization and true Christianity.

The facilities which now exist for the acquirement of Eastern languages tend also greatly to diminish the obstacles in the way of the propagation of the truth. The labours of the early Missionaries

in the formation of vocabularies and grammars, have singularly smoothed the path of their successors. And the translation of the Scriptures into so many living languages, by which almost every man may now read in his own tongue the wonderful works of God, has as it were renewed and perpetuated the miraculous gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost, and is now silently undermining the foundation of Satan's bulwarks. The Bible is penetrating into the fastnesses and strongholds of Buddhism, Brahminism, and Mohammedanism—dissipating the gloom—mitigating the ferocity—overcoming the prejudices, and breaking down the barriers wherever it goes. In reviewing the results of the dissemination of the Scriptures in the East during the last thirty years, we may well exclaim "What has God wrought!" Not only have thousands in the East Indies been converted, but the progress of the word of God and the light of truth has led to the abandonment of many cruel and murderous practices. Suttees and infanticide are suppressed—females are now receiving education, and provision is made for destitute widows. These things have been urged and accelerated by many excellent men, whose political influence among the nations of the East, has been used as another means of removing the barriers which separated between Christianity and superstition. The distinction of caste also is gradually disappearing; and three years ago a law was passed that no Hindoo should thenceforth lose his property or his situation on becoming a Christian. The orthodox Brahmins have felt the importance of this law; they exclaimed, "Now the die is cast and all is over—the reign of Hindooism is gone—and Christianity will become the religion of the people!" A respectable Hindoo said lately to one of the Missionaries, "When God's time comes, we shall all become Christians, just as God has given Hindostan to the English."*

* "What," exclaims the Bishop of Calcutta, "can exceed the inviting prospect which India presents? The fields white for the harvest, and awaiting the hand of the reaper! Nations bursting the intellectual sleep of thirty centuries! Superstitions, no longer in the giant strength of

Many obstacles have also been removed in the East by the political changes that have taken place since the beginning of the present century. Millions of the nations have changed masters—old dynasties have been overthrown. England has doubled her possessions in India, and her influence extends through nearly every country and island in Asia. The fear of offending her has prevented the expulsion of even a solitary Missionary from among the natives of Loo-Choo, and now (through the interference of the Bishop of Hong-Kong,) a wider door is opened before him, so that his labours may possibly be extended to the secluded and exclusive empire of *Japan*. To those distant islands an American squadron is now bending its course, to break down their jealous barriers and compel the Japanese to recognize the brotherhood of nations.*

This brotherhood of nations is now beginning to be recognized by their neighbours the Chinese. That singular people no longer treat the “outside barbarians” with the supercilious contempt and arrogance which are engendered by ignorance and pride. The “great wall” of separation between them and the rest of the world was battered and broken a few years ago by the British, and now the Chinese themselves seem about to level it with the dust. The present extraordinary movement in China is one of the greatest importance, whether we contemplate its objects or its probable results. Like the great rebellion in England, it partakes of a religious as well as of a political character—and has equally in view the overthrow of idolatry and the Tartar dynasty. According to the most

youth, but doting to their fall! Britain placed at the head of the most extensive empire ever consigned to a western sceptre; that is, the only great power of Europe, professing the Protestant faith, entrusted with the thronging nations of Asia, whom she alone could teach! A paternal government, employing every year of tranquillity in elevating and blessing the people unexpectedly thrown upon its protection.”

* Soon after the above was written, the Americans succeeded in effecting a commercial treaty with the Japanese; and subsequently a similar treaty has been made with the British.

recent accounts, the images of the Roman Catholics are treated with as little ceremony as the idols of Buddha, for they rightly conceive that the worship of any graven image under any pretence, is idolatry, and forbidden by the word of God. The success of the insurrection seems almost beyond a doubt; and who can foretell the effects of the change from a Pagan to a Christian government, upon the spiritual and temporal interests of 360 millions of people—one-third of the whole human race? The Chinese have now come into collision with other forms of civilization, and the "spell which caused them to move in circles is broken." This vast population is now being leavened by the spirit of the Gospel, and the seed so laboriously sown by Morrison, by Milne and by Gutzlaff, is now, by the blessing of the Lord, bearing an abundant harvest. When the first translation of the Bible was made into the Chinese language, more than thirty years ago, one of the speakers at a Missionary meeting observed, that a mine of gunpowder was now formed beneath the Great Wall, which would soon effect a breach, and open a way for the Gospel through the length and breadth of the empire of China. The simile has proved a prediction, and is now fulfilling before our eyes.

Another agency which is at work, breaking down the barriers between Christianity and barbarism of every shade, is physical in its nature, but most important in its bearing. Its application belongs entirely to the present generation. I allude to the steam vessels which are now traversing every sea, and bringing the East and the West into close proximity. By them time and space are in a manner annihilated, and the progress of light and truth accelerated with seven-fold speed. And when to these are added the projected lines of railroad, bridging the rivers and tunnelling the hills of the East, accompanied by the lightning-like electric telegraph, it will be impossible to estimate their humanizing effects upon the mind of the Mohammedan, the Buddhist, and the Hindoo.*

* "Within ten years, two lines of steamers have been established through the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, and have maintained a rapid and con-

With all these combined agencies at work, *religious, political, and commercial*, removing the barriers between nation and nation, between civilization and barbarism, and between Christianity and every debasing superstition, can we hesitate in believing them to be the judgments of God upon the strongholds of Satan?—the fulfilment of the vial poured out “upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings from the East might be prepared.” Kings, it will be remembered, are frequently addressed by the prophets as representatives of the kingdoms over which they rule; and after what has been said, we may safely reject every private interpretation which would confine it to one kingdom or one people, and extend the meaning of the phrase to all the nations “from the rising of the sun,” whose way has been so wonderfully prepared for the reception of the Gospel. Soon may we expect to hear the voice of the prophet crying as in

stant intercourse between England and India: a new line, it is confidently hoped, will ere long be added, and the present means of intercourse be increased and improved. Communication is improving also within the continent itself. Numerous steamers now ply along the Ganges, and have begun to navigate the Indus. Our railroad is fairly commenced: our postage rules are about to be modified: an immense number of native newspapers have been called into existence; and the English language has made a giant stride among the young, in the province of Bengal. Within the last year [1854] a regular intercourse has been opened with China by monthly steamers. California and its cities have created new wants and new commerce; and numerous ships have found their way hither from that newly-settled territory. New ties are connecting India with the Australian colonies. The Great Exhibition has shewn, upon a large scale, what India contains, and what its nations can produce. In the east and west, its voice is being heard. It is claiming an important position in the public eye, and men are beginning to acknowledge the justice of our appeals in its behalf. It is no time, then, for the Church of Christ to forget it; to forget that it is open to the Gospel; to forget that the contest between truth and error can be carried on upon fair terms; or to forget that the hand of God has directed His people hither.”—*Results of Missionary Labour in India. By Rev. J. Mullens, p. 58. (1855).*

the days of old, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." (Isa. xl. 3—5.) "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. i. 11.)

The vision may, indeed, have a still further meaning in reference to a future time, when these kings may come swiftly from the East to the help of the Church, when she shall be assailed in the West by the united forces of the enemy—the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

St. John adds, verses 13, 14, "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet: for they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

To enumerate the many meanings attached to this passage, would occupy too much time. I shall therefore give my own view of the subject, sustained I trust by Scripture, and illustrated by events which are now passing around us. St. John, as the representative of the Church on earth says, "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon," &c.—denoting, that the causes which would lead to the gathering together of the kings of the earth and their armies should be manifested, and seen to partake of a mixed character of cunning and audacity, boldness and falsehood. Frog-like spirits—loathsome yet fearful. Such we shall find to have been the ruling principles that have led to the present position of affairs throughout the continent of Europe.

The question has been put, Are evil spirits permitted to tempt men?—Yes, verily. St. John himself, in his first epistle, warns believers against them. And the prophet Micaiah, in a well-known

parallel passage to the one before us, says, he *saw* a lying spirit go forth from the presence of the Lord to persuade Ahab to "go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead."

Many recent circumstances have been alleged by expositors as proofs of the working of these "frog-like spirits," such as Tractarianism, and the late Popish aggression; but these, though significant of the power of Satan, fail in the great object of the frog-like spirits, which is, the *gathering together of the kings*, that they may go up, and fall, like Ahab, at the second Ramoth-gilead. These spirits also came "out of the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet." The symbolical meaning of these three, we have on former occasions considered. The first, the *Dragon*, denotes Satan, the great enemy of God and man, who gives to the other two all their power, and inflames them with his own spirit of deception and cruelty. He tempted our first parents to disobey God, and flattered them with the hope of becoming as gods themselves. This is the true spirit of *Infidelity* and lawless *Democracy*—and was manifested, in remarkable accordance with the symbol in the text, only five years ago in a neighbouring country, when the people, in an almost miraculous manner, threw off their allegiance, and their leaders, swollen with pride, loudly and mendaciously croaked, "Liberty, fraternity, and equality," through the whole of France. From France the spirit passed into Germany and Italy—every where leaving the trail of the unclean animal,—atheism and anarchy!

The frog from the *Beast* indicates the spirit of *Despotism*. For the Beast every where in prophecy is the figure under which the empires or *temporal* kingdoms of the earth are represented—not the spiritual power. And so we find immediately after the revolutionary crisis of 1848, the despotic spirit began to manifest itself. First, in a manner crawling and contemptible; on the part of those kings whose thrones were tottering beneath them; for they promised to the people constitutions and privileges with equal loudness and insincerity:—and then, when they regained the power of which they had well nigh been deprived, it was used more despotically than before. In France especially, the change from so called *liberty*

to the most uncontrolled *despotism*, was so sudden and stupendous, that it was deemed little short of miraculous. Like the toad, squat by the couch of Eve, when touched by the spear of Ithuriel, it started up in the gigantic proportions of the fallen Archangel. The whole series of agents and events indeed, during the last five years, both in France and other continental states, have been of such a wonderful nature—that we may justly apply to them the expression used in the text—"they are the spirits of devils working miracles." For both rulers and people seem to have been possessed with a spirit of madness and infatuation. A spirit sent forth to them overpowering their own. This seems equally true of the proceedings of the *third frog*, as of the two preceding.

It is described as coming out of the mouth of the *False Prophet*, and is the spirit of *Superstition*. The false prophet is the worker of miracles in the 19th chapter, and is the same as the two-horned Lamb-like beast which deceiveth the nations, in the 13th chapter. It is the Papacy. The Pope himself was the first who (in 1847) began, in a spirit of liberalism, strangely at variance with the policy of his predecessors, to grant immunities and privileges to his subjects; but he soon found, that he had raised a spirit which he could not control; and in attempting to repress it, he lost the reins of power, and was compelled to seek safety in an ignominious flight. But the kings of the Continent felt their interests to be closely identified with those of the Papacy; and a spirit of superstition has guided their policy in a remarkable manner. Thus we find France, contrary to her professions and principles, sending an army to force back the Pope on his unwilling subjects—and Spain, Naples, and Austria, assisting in the same meritorious work.

But this part of the vision appears to have had its special fulfilment in still more recent occurrences.

A spirit of superstition regarding the guardianship of the "holy places," has led to the present hostile attitude of Russia and Turkey. This also, strange to say, had its origin in France. For France, putting herself forward as the champion of Popery, obtained from the Porte certain concessions in favour of the Latins at Jerusalem, to the detriment of the immemorial privileges enjoyed by

the Greeks. The result was, the interference of the Emperor of Russia; and he obtained from Turkey a firman or decree restoring to the Greek Church its ancient superiority in the Holy Land. But the Emperor complains, that the provisions of this firman have not been carried out.* "The most flagrant violation being the delivery to the Latin Patriarch of the key of the principal Church at Bethlehem. This was contrary to the express terms of the firman. It wounded deeply the clergy, and all the population of the Greco-Russ faith; because, according to the ideas which are current in Palestine, the possession of the *key* seems to imply, by itself alone, that of the temple in its entirety. This alleged breach of faith has led to fresh demands from the Russians, with which the Turks not only refuse to comply, but have now determined to resist by force of arms." The frog-like spirit of these proceedings is strongly marked.

The contemptible nature of the charges against Turkey—the bluster and insincerity of the Russians—have been almost everywhere reprobated.† For when, but a few years ago, the Greek subjects of the Porte were suffering even unto death, the Emperor of Russia stirred not a finger in their behalf. But now, uncalled for interference suits his ambitious designs, and a spirit of fanaticism is evoked on both sides, which animates the ranks of Russians and Mussulmans alike. Thus, the foreseen and predicted events

* First Russian Circular note.—*Times*, June 22, 1853.

† "The history of Russia," says Lord Lyndhurst, "from the establishment of the empire, down to the present moment, is a history of fraud, duplicity, trickery, artifice, and violence. The present Emperor (Nicholas) has proclaimed himself Protector of the Greek Church in Turkey, just as the Empress Catherine declared herself Protector of the Greek Church in Poland. We know the result While Nicholas was pretending to act the part of Protector of Turkey, and trying to cajole the Sultan with professions of friendship and esteem, he was, at the same time, planning the partition of his empire." It is understood that the unjustifiable attack upon the possessions of "the sick man," was hastened by a superstitious belief among the Russians and Greeks, that "the empire which ended 400 years ago, when Constantinople was taken by the Turks, would be restored *de facto* in 1853."

which are symbolized in the Apocalypse, as about to be accomplished, have been preceded by singular, unexpected, and most frog-like movements.

The three unclean spirits "go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." And truly the kings of the earth and their armies *are gathered together* at the present day, and the battle will soon begin. Never since the flood, were such immense hosts of armed men on foot. "Europe," said Mr. Cobden, a few months ago, "has almost degenerated into a military barracks. It is computed by Baron Von Reden, the celebrated German statistical writer, that one-half of its population, in the flower of manhood, are bearing arms. It is certain, that in the very height of Napoleon's wars, the effective force of the Continental armies was less than at present." The troops of France amount to 404,500 men; of Austria 540,000; of Prussia 225,550, besides militia; of Russia 750,000, (now nearly 1,000,000). Turkey has mustered 300,000, and the Egyptians, the Arabs, and other tribes, are marching to her assistance. For it is not the kings of the Roman or the Papal earth, but of the whole world, that are now to be gathered together! Everywhere, indeed, we behold the elements of strife and disorder. "Mighty armies are marshalled, (said an influential Journal a short time since), and no one knows against what enemy or what country they will be led forth in battle array. In all the darkness of Europe, there is but one bright spot, and that is in our own island." England calmly awaits the issue.

And it is evident to all who have watched the progress of events, that the gathering together and the maintenance of these mighty armaments, originated in the working of those spirits of infidelity and revolution—of despotism and oppression—of superstition and fanaticism—which have followed each other in rapid succession during the last five years.

When they may assemble "in the place called *Armageddon*," and under whose leadership commence "the battle of the great day," is known only to Him with whom the future is as the present! We are warned that it will be sudden and unexpected:—

sudden as were the Revolutions of 1848: as was the successful reaction of despotism: as the assumption of Imperial power by the present ruler of France:—unexpected as the threatened war in the East. When war commences, the seventh angel will begin to “pour out his vial into the air.”*

Armageddon signifies the *mountain of destruction*; but several writers have sought to identify it with the valley of Megiddo, or the valley of *decision*, in the Holy Land; and there are many predictions which intimate that the battle of the Lord against his congregated enemies will there be decided.† The *leader* of those enemies is very obscurely hinted at. We have seen that France has been the principal theatre in which the frog-like spirits were exhibited; and it would be merely following out the suggestions to which late events

* War was declared against Russia, March 27, 1854. It is not a war into which England and France have rushed. They held back—*reluctantly* went to war. They have, as it were, been dragged into it. Other nations will, in like manner, be drawn into the vortex. They are *all* represented as *gathered* together—involuntarily and unconsciously accomplishing the purposes of God.

† The Rev. D. Nihilm has lately suggested another meaning of *Armageddon*, which has excited considerable attention. “*Ar*,” he says, “in Hebrew, signifies a city—*Magedon*, pre-eminent or *illustrious*. Thus we have the *illustrious city*. St. John wrote in Greek; and, if he had not forsaken the Greek for the Hebrew, the passage would have run thus in our English version: ‘And he gathered them together into a place called in the Greek tongue SEBASTOPOL.’ This is too plain for prophecy, which employs enigmatical devices for the purpose of presenting truth, as it were looming in a mist, to the eye of faith, while it conceals the precise event foreshadowed from certain knowledge, until the proper period for its development. The enigma here is using *Armageddon* for *Sebastopol*. But even had *Sebastopol* been written, the meaning would have been equally obscure to the time when Catherine II. got possession of the Crimea. The Tartar name of the place was *Aktiar*. She changed it to *Sebastopol*; which Dr. Clarke, in his *Travels*, speaks of as a *fantastic* name. Yet it is now really *illustrious*. The eyes of the world are fixed upon it.” It is curious, also, that there is a valley near Sebastopol called the *Valley of Jehoshaphat*, (see Joel iii.) A colony of Karaite Jews live there. The great variety of nations, of which

have given rise, to look to that country * for the leader "of the kings of the earth and the world,"—when infidelity, despotism, and superstition will be arrayed, not against each other, but "against the Lord and against his Anointed,"—against those who fear God and keep his commandments,—against the kingdom whose government is not despotic,—and the people who neither riot in infidelity, nor crouch under superstition.

To such especially is the warning voice of the 15th verse addressed—"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." This is the preparation required of the Church. An expectation of the Master's coming—a listening attitude—an attentive eye to the signs of the times—and a readiness for suffering or for action. The warning has been given again and again, denoting how sudden and unexpected will be the Lord's coming, not only to the world, but even to the Church. It was addressed especially to the Church at Sardis, and she is threatened if she watch not. It is addressed to the children of light, to each individual believer, who is exhorted to watch and be sober, and to put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation.

In every age of Christianity, and at all seasons, has this warning been suitable; but now, in these critical times, it is doubly so. The suddenness of the startling events around us, are only pre-

the troops in the Crimea are composed, adds to the force of the above suggestion. Russia is said, also, to be gathering recruits for her army from all the tribes subject to her sway. The names of some of those distant and barbarous races have scarcely been heard of in Europe. The year 1856 may, therefore, witness in the Crimea, a more multitudinous concourse of the various nations of the earth, than ever were assembled together before; and startling events will, in all probability, be the result. But I believe the struggle around Sebastopol is only the first act in the great drama which has commenced. It is the prelude to that final and decisive "battle," which will determine the fate, not merely of Turkey and Russia, but of all the continental powers of Europe, and especially of Austria and the Papacy. The consideration of this subject, however, belongs to a subsequent Lecture.

* Their present Ruler, it is said, has expressed his conviction, that he is destined to invade if not to conquer England!

monitions of the wide-spreading judgments which the angel with the seventh vial in his hand now stands ready to pour out. The Lord will come, as he came upon the Egyptians with the last plague. "About *midnight* will I go out into the midst of Egypt." It is a warning to professors, not to sleep as in the night, lest they be found unprepared when sudden destruction cometh—startling them from slumber, and exposing them to nakedness and shame.

Both the church and the world are to a certain extent prepared: the signs of the times are too portentous to pass by without arresting the attention even of those who look not beyond this boundary of earth; and the Church has sought out the meaning of the prophecy with greater eagerness than ever before.* The discoveries of science—the development of the human intellect—the excavations of the mounds in the valley of the Euphrates, corroborating the truth of predictions uttered thousands of years ago—the explorations, which are making us acquainted with the hitherto unknown regions of the earth—the wonderful influx of gold into Protestant England and America—and the changes that Christianity is effecting in the morals and the policy of the world, amidst the gathering of the kings to the battle of the great day:—all impress the mind with a belief that a crisis is at hand—that the Almighty is about to accomplish some great work. That work, the believer knows, is the overthrow of Satan's kingdom, and the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness and peace.

But this will be ushered in by a shaking among the nations, such as never yet has been felt upon the earth. And seeing that we look for such things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?

It behoves believers, therefore, to *watch*, like servants waiting for the coming of their Lord, with their loins girt and their lights burning,—*doing* the Lord's work, not indulging in their own pleasures; laying not up treasure on earth, but being rich towards God—rich in faith, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, conti-

* A society, called the "Prophetic Society," is just now (Dec. 1855,) formed in London, whose object is the investigation of unfulfilled prophecy.

ning instant in prayer. Our watchfulness will be rewarded with the promised blessing. Relying on Jesus our king for protection, and trusting in His atonement alone for salvation, he will clothe us with the robe of his righteousness, so that when he cometh, we shall stand before him, neither naked nor ashamed.

The ancient Jewish Church was the type as well as the precursor of the Christian. And the position of the Church now, is similar to that of the Israelites on that memorable night which terminated their sojourning in the land of Egypt. God had promised them deliverance, and announced the death of all the first-born of their oppressors. Believing in God, they kept the Passover,—they ate the flesh of the lamb, with their loins girded, their shoes on their feet, their staff in their hands—and they awaited in stillness and earnest expectation the signal of deliverance. At the solemn hour of midnight, “a great cry was heard in Egypt”: the destroying angel had gone forth on his mission, and “there was not a house where there was not one dead.” But the Israelites had sprinkled the blood of the lamb on their door-posts, and the destroyer passed over and touched them not. Even so, when the seventh vial is poured out, we need fear no evil if we live by faith on the Lamb of God: if his blood be sprinkled on our hearts. The voices and thunderings and lightnings, and the mighty earthquake, may spread terror and desolation through the earth, in that great and terrible day; “but whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said.” (Joel ii. 32.)

Thou who so graciously didst lead
Israel of old, from bondage freed,
And by thine own almighty hand
Didst guide them to the promis'd land,
A cloud thy brightness veiling in the day,
By night thy pillar'd fire did mark their way;
That mighty power thou then didst show,
Attends us still, where'er we go,
And we, though undeserving, share
Thy tender love, thy watchful care,
While we thy leadings faithfully pursue,
And keep the cloud and pillar still in view.

LECTURE XIX.

THE SEVENTH VIAL.—THE OVERTHROW OF SATAN'S KINGDOM.—DISTURBANCE IN THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE.—NATIONAL CONVULSIONS.—DIVISION OF THE GREAT CITY.—THE PLAGUE OF HAIL.—JUDGMENT OF BABYLON.—HER DESCRIPTION.—MYSTERY OF THE WOMAN: DISTINCT FROM THE BEAST.—THE SEVEN HEADS.—THE EIGHTH HEAD.—THE TEN HORNS.—OVERTHROW OF THE PAPACY.—REVELATION XVI. 17—21; XVII. 1—18.

“AND the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”—(Rev. xvi. 17—21.)

The pouring out of the seventh vial is the last great act in the drama, which closes the struggle between the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman—between the light and the darkness—between the Church on earth and the powers of Hell. Like the opening of the seventh seal, the pouring out of the seventh vial introduces fresh actors and new scenery; and like the sounding of the seventh trumpet, of which it is, indeed, the last startling note, its grand

design and general scope is summed up in a few stirring sentences, which are afterwards unfolded and expanded in the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters.

It had previously been announced, (ch. x. 7.) that in the days of the voice of the seventh trumpet-angel, "the mystery of God should be finished;" and now, when the seventh vial is poured out, St. John hears a great voice from the temple proclaiming, "It is done."

This vial is poured out "into the *air*." As the sun and stars are frequently employed to symbolize kings and rulers, so the air must necessarily signify the political atmosphere—the forms of government, or rather the principles on which the various governments of the earth are conducted.

Satan is called "the Prince of the power of the air;" and it is too manifest, that the governments of this world are all, in a greater or lesser degree, influenced by his spirit: the spirit of disobedience to the will of God, of opposition to those principles of love and truth, of righteousness and of peace, which our Lord came upon earth to disseminate among men, and which must eventually predominate. The prevalence of those principles will effect a change in all human governments, such as the world has never witnessed; and to that change prophecy is continually pointing, as the "reign of the saints;" when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

This pouring out of the seventh vial into the air, then, intimates the overthrow of Satan's kingdom on the earth. In explaining the meaning of the sixth vial, we noticed the extensive preparations which have already been made for that event. But, as might be inferred, even in the absence of prophecy, the great Serpent will not relinquish his hold without a struggle. The effect of the invasion of his peculiar seat of power—the principles by which men are governed and guided—is compared to the disturbance which sometimes takes place in the natural atmosphere, "There were voices, and thunders, and lightnings," accompanied also, as these phenomena not unfrequently are, by "a great earthquake, such as

was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." Similar language is used in the 8th chapter, in describing the effects of the fire which the angel who stood before the golden altar cast upon the earth; and the fulfilment of that vision was the disturbance of the Roman empire, by the fierce and clamorous disputes of the Arians and Catholics, the tumults which arose from the Novatian and Donatist fanaticism, and the religious intolerance of the orthodox; combined with the civil commotions and foreign wars, which distracted and rent the empire in the reign of the Emperor Valens. The earthquake, then predicted, had a literal as well as figurative fulfilment. And we are warranted in anticipating not merely similar, but even greater commotions in earth and sky, in religion and in politics, in the kingdoms of the world and in the churches established in Christendom, than those which convulsed the empire in the year 365. For that earthquake, which is *yet* to come, and which may commence *this year or the next*, is "such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great;" "a time of trouble," as Daniel calls it, (xii. 1.) "such as never was since there was a nation."

The clamorous *voice* of religious disputation is beginning even now to make itself heard on the continent; and the "thunders and lightnings" of political liberty have only been silenced, not extinguished; and are ready again to burst forth with ten-fold violence.

The effects of these convulsions are described. "The great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell." "The great city," as we have already seen, signifies the Roman empire, or rather those kingdoms of the old empire which now adhere to the Papacy. This city will be divided into three parts. How this is to be effected, or of what the different parts may consist, we can only conjecture. Some have supposed that it refers to the *three* spirits of *democracy*, *despotism*, and *superstition*, who will divide among them the nations of the continent,—after absorbing all the minor states and obliterating all former boundaries.

In a former figurative earthquake, mentioned in the 11th chapter, it is said, "the tenth part of the city fell." This was referred to the

era of the Reformation, when England, and other portions of the "great city," fell off from their allegiance to Rome, and were no longer numbered among the Popish States. For Popery, or the woman, is expressly declared in the next chapter, to be "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" and which is also called "Babylon, that great city," in the 14th chapter.

It has, therefore, been conjectured, that one of the first results of the coming convulsions, will be the third part of the present Popish nations renouncing their adherence to Rome and ranging themselves on the side of Protestantism. The spirit of inquiry which is now abroad, and the spread of Gospel light, afford ground for hoping that this may take place. But it is a consummation more devoutly to be wished for, than confidently anticipated.*

This predicted disruption however, is not confined to either Popery or Protestantism. It extends over the whole world—"the cities of the nations fell." These are evidently distinct from the great city. They refer to cities or kingdoms, beyond the pale of Christendom. And when we contemplate what is now taking place in the distant regions of the earth, we cannot hesitate in believing, that great changes are on the eve of fulfilment. Ancient dynasties are dissolving, and the thrones of many kingdoms seem about to be subverted. The extensive empire of China is now being revolutionized. And the threatened portentous war in the East may as probably result in the dismemberment of Russia, as effect the downfall of Turkey.

Whatever may be the actual accomplishment of these predictions,

* "Europe is in motion, for good as well as for evil. Austria has indeed sold herself into double slavery; Tuscany persecutes; Naples plays the madman; Rome still forges chains for both soul and body. But the word of God is not bound, nor His Spirit straitened. Spain receives the Bible—Spain, the region of inquisition, darkness and cruelty; Piedmont receives it—Piedmont, the old persecutor of the saints; France gives it liberty; Italy welcomes it, though in silence and by stealth; Sweden revives under the heavenly rain."—*Evangelical Alliance—Circular*, Jan. 1856.

we may rest satisfied that mighty revolutions are about to take place, not only in Europe, but far beyond its boundaries. Revolutions which will affect the government and religion, the policy and the territorial divisions of the kingdoms of the earth, to a far greater extent than has hitherto happened in the history of nations.

An instinctive feeling of the momentous results that may follow a disturbance of the present tranquillity of Europe, seems to be diffused through the Western States of Christendom. This is peculiarly displayed in the general deprecation of hostilities between the Russians and the Turks. Never on any former occasion was so much interest manifested—such apprehension expressed—or such earnest and long-continued endeavours on the part of the Western Powers to prevent a war, which all seem to consider as destined to become dreadful in its course, and decisive in its consequences.*

To shew the awful and irresistible nature of these convulsions, it is added, "every island fled away and the mountains were not found." The same figurative language is employed in the 6th chapter, to denote the changes that were effected in the Roman Empire, when, under Constantine the Great, Paganism fell before Christianity, and heathen dignitaries and heathen idols were moved out of their places: Jeremiah also (iv. 24.) uses the same metaphor, when he is predicting the fearful judgments of God upon the land of Judah. And the time is surely at hand, when many time-honoured and venerable institutions, which seem now fixed and secure as "islands" in the midst of the sea, shall flee away; and the political and social barriers

* The war commenced soon after these Lectures were delivered, and it is calculated that already (Jan. 1856,) nearly 500,000 human beings have fallen victims to its ravages. Notwithstanding negotiations for peace, vast preparations are being made for carrying on the war with greater vigour. But even if peace were to be speedily concluded with Russia, there is little hope of its permanency on the Continent of Europe. The people generally are dissatisfied with their rulers, and too enlightened to remain quiet in thralldom. They stand ready to join the ranks of the first champion of "liberty."

between nation and nation, which appear firm and rooted as "the mountains," in the coming struggle shall not be found.

Following after or combined with these changes, it is said, "There fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent." A talent is equal in weight to 100lbs. But the weight is symbolical as well as the hail itself: and exhibits most impressively the overpowering and irresistible nature of that particular judgment which God will inflict upon the earth. It will be like the plague of hail in the days of Pharaoh, which was "very grievous, such as there was none like it in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation." It "smote both man and beast and brake every tree of the field."*

Hail is usually understood as symbolical of an invasion from the north. Such was the historical explanation given of the hail and fire cast upon the earth when the first angel sounded his trumpet.† A similar irruption of irresistible armies from the north into the kingdoms of the Beast is here prefigured; and may be fulfilled by the immense power of Russia, being precipitated upon the nations of southern Europe to revenge their present interference. But perhaps this part of the vision may have reference to the closing scene in the judgment, as more fully developed in the 19th chapter, when the combined armies, under the beast and the kings of the earth, shall be overthrown and destroyed—probably by the Northern Protestants of England, Sweden, and Denmark; assisted, we may believe, as the Israelites were under Joshua, by a literal hailstorm from heaven.

But even this plague, though "exceeding great," will produce no repentance among the men upon whom the previous vials have

* Similar hail storms have been experienced in other countries,—and one occurred in Hertfordshire in 1697, after a storm of thunder and lightning, by which several persons were killed. Trees were split by it, and fields of corn cut down as with a scythe. Many of the stones were 13 and 14 inches in circumference.

† See Lecture IV., page 59.

already been poured out. Instead of humbling themselves under his chastising hand, it is added, "men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail." These worshippers of the beast and his image, have their hearts hardened, like Pharaoh's, and they are angry; the time of their utter destruction is come (Rev. xi. 18); for it is written, "the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse—and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."—(ch. xix. 21.)

While these events are in progress, the great enemy of the Church is called to her account. "Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Babylon is acknowledged by all commentators to signify Rome. There is scarcely any point in the Apocalypse on which there is greater unanimity. Even Roman Catholic writers admit that the Babylon of prophecy is the seven-hilled city, and maintain that Rome is the Babylon from which St. Peter dates his first epistle. Only they restrict the identity to Rome Pagan, and deny its application to Rome Papal. To the city of the Popes some of them have even applied the description given in the 21st chapter, of "that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, and her light like unto a stone most precious, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it."

But the crimes with which the Babylon of the Apocalypse is charged, belong to the Papal, rather than to the Pagan city. Rome Pagan conquered the nations by her might—Rome Papal has "deceived them by her sorceries;" and made them "drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Rome Pagan certainly put to death many hundreds of the saints—but Rome Papal has martyred tens of thousands, and is described as "drunken with their blood."

Still less is the predicted punishment of Babylon applicable to the Rome of the Emperors, for it retained its grandeur and dignity long after it ceased to be the capital of Paganism; and has suffered more since it became the seat of the Popes than it had ever done

before. Its predicted end—sudden, fearful, fiery, and irretrievable—had no accomplishment in the mutations of ancient Rome. But there are many ominous signs in the present day, both social and physical, that such will be the fate of the modern city. God will give unto her the cup of trembling, and make her an utter desolation, even as “a burnt mountain,”—like to the literal Babylon, whom she has resembled in her crimes, and will resemble in her punishment.

And the Lord condescends, as it were, to justify his ways to men, to assign reasons for his strange work—“the fierceness of his wrath” against Babylon. For this purpose, the onward progress of the Apocalypse is interrupted, and the spiritual Babylon, in all her glory, during the zenith of her power, is exhibited to the eyes of the wondering Apostle. He had already witnessed her rise and progress, in the visions recorded in the 12th and 13th chapters.

In those visions the downfall of Paganism is symbolized in the defeat and expulsion of the Dragon; whose wrath is kindled against the seed of the woman, who have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The Dragon afterwards gives power and authority to a Beast who doeth great wonders, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth. These visions were fulfilled in the corruption of the Church, and the subjugation of the state by Popery. To this beast was given power to continue forty and two months, or one thousand two hundred and three-score years, and during that period it was to make war with the saints and to overcome them. The vision now before us in the 17th chapter, seems to commence where that in the 13th ended, and is a pictorial representation or history of the Papacy from the thirteenth century to the end of her career. The figures employed differ from those formerly given; for “the destruction of the antichristian empire is a subject of such importance and consequence, that the Holy Spirit hath thought fit to represent it under a variety of images.”

“And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many

waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written. MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.”—(ch. xvii. 1—6.)

The angel who talked with St. John is supposed to have been the seventh, who after pouring out his vial into the air, was permitted to explain to the Apostle the final results of the important changes which it should produce in the world and in the Church. As Ezekiel was carried by the spirit to Jerusalem; so he carried St. John into the wilderness, that he might see the “woman sitting on the scarlet-coloured beast.” The wilderness is usually supposed to mean the literal wilderness, which for many ages past has surrounded the city of Rome. This is the opinion of Elliott in his great work on the Apocalypse, and he adduces many striking passages, which prove the desolate condition of the Papal territories, compared with their ancient fruitful and blooming appearance. His statements are doubtless correct; but we may question their application to the wilderness in the vision. For the wilderness is certainly figurative, just as the woman herself is; and besides, the woman is described as sitting *not* in the wilderness, but on “many waters,” which, as the angel explains, “are peoples and multitudes and nations.”

St. John, as has been frequently explained, was himself the representative of the Church on earth, as well as the interpreter to the Church of the things he saw in heaven. During that period of history to which the vision carries us back, the true Church, the

persecuted woman, was in "the wilderness," to which she had fled to escape the wrath of the Dragon. *There* the scene is laid—and never was the Church in a more wilderness condition than when *Babylon the Great* was in all her glory,—“drunken with the blood of the saints.” And it was only, as it were, by joining the true Church *in the wilderness*, that St. John could obtain the proper point of view for seeing the “great mystery of iniquity” in all its glaring colours and hideous deformity.

As adding weight to the opinion I have advanced of the figurative meaning of the wilderness, it is worthy of notice, that the Waldenses, (those suffering saints in the wilderness,) were the first who applied to the Church of Rome, the name and character of “Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth.” This was in the thirteenth century—the culminating point in the history of Papal Antichrist.

The description throughout is applicable to Papal Rome, and to nothing else. She alone made the inhabitants of the earth drunk with the wine of her fornication,—that is, imposed upon them idolatrous rites and ceremonies for the simple doctrines of the Gospel,—the pure water of life. She alone has her seat on a seven-hilled city. She alone has ever ruled over kings by deception and blandishment and spiritual power. Nor could the submissiveness of the Emperors and Kings of Christendom in those dark ages, (contrasted with the crafty and imperious despotism of the Popes) be exhibited by a more lively and significant emblem than that of a woman sitting upon a beast, directing and governing it according to her will.* Indeed Rome herself is represented, in ancient coins, as a woman sitting upon a lion. The beast on which she rides is scarlet coloured, and the woman herself is arrayed in purple and scarlet. This is the well known distinguishing colour of the Pope and Cardinals—the

* “Let not the Emperor,” (Henry IV.), says Pope Gregory VII., in a letter to the German nation, A. D. 1076, “suppose that the Church is subject to him as a servant; it is placed over him as a mistress.”—Quoted in Brougham’s Political Philosophy, i. 547.

very mules and horses which carry them are also covered with scarlet cloth.

On the scarlet trappings of the beast are inscribed "names of blasphemy:"—denoting the blasphemous titles which were given to the Popes, the superstitious feelings with which the priests and monks were regarded by the people in those ages, and the blasphemous powers they assumed as attaching to their character, especially that of forgiving sins for, money ; for, as the Jews rightly reasoned, "who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?"

The pride and grandeur and magnificence of the Church of Rome in her shrines, and vestments, and ornaments, is prophetically described in the decking of the woman "with gold, and precious stones, and pearls." A Popish author asserts the superiority of his own Church above others, because of the pomp and splendour of her religion, "The golden cup in her hand," signifies the specious and alluring arts wherewith she bewitches and incites men to idolatry. The same figure is used by the prophet Jeremiah, (li. 7,) "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunken." The wine excited the nations to madness. But the wine of Rome produced slavish submission to her debasing and bloody injunctions.

The *scarlet* colour may also be emblematical of the cruel and persecuting character of both the woman and the beast. The beast was subservient to the woman: the nations and kings of that era believed they were doing the will of God, when, at the bidding of the Pope, they warred against both saints and Saracens—and were equally ready to march to the Holy Land, or against the Waldenses. The Pope had blessed both crusades, and granted special indulgences to all who engaged in them. But his great object was the extermination of the "heretics"—thousands and tens of thousands were slain—till, in the fearfully significant language of the vision, the woman was "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

Well might St. John "wonder with great admiration"—at the successful malice and cruelty of the woman—at the faith and pa-

tience of the saints—at the long-suffering and forbearance of God.

“And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space. And the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” (ver. 7—18.)

The explanation by the angel, of “the mystery of the Woman and of the Beast that carrieth her,” has been the subject of much discussion, and given rise to a variety of conflicting opinions among the interpreters of prophecy.

The great source of confusion has been inattention to the marked distinction, which the angel makes between the Woman and the

Beast. The one is the Papacy, represented in the zenith of its power—the other represents the kings and nations over whom the Papacy rules. Yet, though repeatedly distinguished by the angel, they seem to be considered as identical by many commentators. These have failed in keeping separate the characters of the several Apocalyptic Beasts; and especially, the two-fold nature—the animal and spiritual life—of the Beast that “shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and go into perdition.”

Now, the prevailing dogma that pervades the mass of Romish ecclesiastical writings, is the superiority of the Church to the world. The Church is spoken of as the *soul*, the world as the *body*,* harmonizing in a well-ordered Government—that is, when entire obedience is rendered to the Pope; for we must never forget that the Church means, not the Christian community at large, but simply the Pope and his adherents. Keeping this idea of “body” and “soul” before us, what light does it not throw on the apparently enigmatical Beasts of the Apocalypse? The Beast which rose up out of the sea of anarchy (chap. xiii.), is the *body*; but its animating *spirit* rises out of the abyss. (chapters xi. & xvii.) The seven heads and ten horns indicate the shape of the body, but the “mouth opened in blasphemy against God,” is the expression of the soul. Again, the “image of the Beast” is the same body; but he who gave life to it had the spirit of the Dragon, and “exercised all its power.” Still more clearly, in the chapter before us, is the animal

* Miley's Papal States, vol. ii. p. 24.

† The word translated “bottomless pit,” usually denotes an *abyss*—exceedingly deep, as the sea; it also signifies *hell*, the place of punishment. Thus understood, the expression may signify that the *body* of the beast came out of the abyss of waters (Rev. xiii. 1, and xvii. 8), or state of turbulence and confusion in which the nations were plunged before the establishment of Charlemagne's empire; and that the *spirit*, or principles which governed it, rose from the abyss of hell (Rev. xi. 7), or place of Satan and the devils. (See Luke viii. 31; Matt. viii. 29.) But according to Bishop Newton, the *sea* and the *abyss*, or the *bottomless pit*, signify the same thing.—*Diss.* xxv. pt. ii. p. 537.

existence of the one, and the intellectual life of the other indicated in the vision. It is the Woman *riding on the Beast*.* The peoples and nations animated by the Popish spirit! And to mark the distinction most emphatically, the ten horns or kings, however submissive they have been, and are even now, will, in the end, according to the angel's explanation, "give their strength unto the Beast," and overthrow the Woman, or Papacy—perhaps by some sudden frenzy, like a wild beast, turning upon and destroying its keeper.

But the Beast, also, it is written, shall "go into perdition," that is, be utterly destroyed as a political body, losing every vestige of power and influence, and becoming a wonderment to the nations "that dwell on the earth." This seems to indicate, that the present Roman Catholic states shall, at some future, though not distant period, be completely overthrown and subdued by a powerful race, as the Greeks were subjugated by the Turks four centuries ago. Daniel (vii. 11, 12, 27,) says, the fourth "beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time.—And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the *people of the saints* of the Most High." St. John intimates that this will be effected by the "war with the Lamb."

* See the Austrian Concordat with Rome. "The rare phenomenon of an empire laying its neck under the feet of a Pope has been presented in 1855.—I have no hesitation in asserting, as I am able to prove, that no serf in 'Holy Russia' is more at the mercy of the Autocrat than the young Emperor of Austria is now at the mercy of the Vatican."—*Dr. Cumming*. A German writer, in 1852, speaking of the fatal policy, which "in the Austrian dominions drowned the Reformation in blood," says, "The sins of this policy have not yet borne all their fruits; but the time is near at hand when the tumours will burst, and when expiation will follow." Her present temporizing policy will, in all probability, hasten her destruction; and if she should be involved in war, with either France or Russia, her crippled finances, and discontented subjects, must render her power of resistance very problematical.

The final development and destruction of the Beast, shall not be a wonder to the "people of the saints," but only to those "whose names were not written in the book of life." The Church has been warned again and again; and especially now, when the nations are gathered to the battle, is the admonition given, "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth." (Rev. xvi. 15.) The "gathering" is one of the signs of the approaching crisis:—it is as a word to the wise. And therefore it is added, "Here is the mind which hath wisdom." For "none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." (Dan. xii. 10.) Those then who have "the wisdom that is from above," will know that when the beast goeth "into perdition," the "kingdom of God is nigh at hand;" and they will take heed to themselves, lest "that day come upon them unawares."

The angel goes on to tell St. John, that "the seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." This expression fixes the seat of the Papacy, as a local and temporal state, on the seven-hilled city of Rome. To no other city does this description apply. Yet we are not to confound these seven mountains with the seven heads of the Beast. For it is also true, that the seven heads or forms of government which have successively existed in the Roman empire, have all had power and authority over the seven mountains, or in the city of Rome.

This part of the explanation needs "the mind which hath wisdom." It requires the patient exercise of the understanding, and careful examination, to distinguish between the seven mountains on which the woman sitteth—and the spiritual "great city," which is the woman herself, who "reigneth over the kings of the earth;" and also to understand the double interpretation of the seven heads; for the seven heads are not merely seven mountains belonging to the *woman*, but, the angel adds, "There are seven kings," or seven different forms of government, belonging to the *beast*. This appears to be the literal meaning of the seven heads.

Nearly all commentators agree in considering these seven kings as the seven heads of the Beast. But it has been found a difficult

matter to enumerate them. Scarcely two writers name the seven alike. The Beast itself, the body, or the nations and peoples of which it is composed, have remained substantially the same from the rise of its power. It is identical with the fourth Beast of the prophet Daniel, which succeeded the four-headed or Macedonian empire; and it will remain until the end of the present dispensation. But its government has materially changed in various periods of its history.

Without referring to other authors, I shall only mention the heads or forms of government in the Roman empire enumerated by Elliott:—1, Kings—2, Consuls,—3, Dictators—4, Decemvirs—5, Military Tribunes—6, Crowned Emperors—7, Diademed Emperors, beginning with Diocletian;—and the 8th Head, the Bishops of Rome. His great object, indeed, is to shew that the Pope is the eighth Head of the Beast; and he employs much learning in endeavouring to prove it. But that ecclesiastical personage is, I believe, nowhere in the Apocalypse indicated as a Head. The Poppedom, as a temporal power, is indeed a horn, as Daniel points out most distinctly; and it takes its place amongst the ten. Even as a spiritual power, it did not exercise its wonderful influence as a form of government, or Head; but only as a “mouth,” an “eye,” a “living soul,” ruling, commanding, guiding, and animating both head and members of the Beast.

Besides, the eighth head is declared in this chapter to be “of the seven,” thereby implying a resuscitation of, or likeness to, one of the former heads; whereas the Pope, as a Head, would be more distinct from any of the former than they are from each other, and would be dissimilar to all, bearing no resemblance to any that had gone before.

But the numbering of the heads by Elliott appears unsatisfactory. To the Dictators, Decemvirs, and Tribunes, might, with equal propriety, be added Triumvirs. They were as really and truly a head of the Roman empire as the others, and governed Rome with most despotic power for twelve years: whereas the Decemvirate was entirely abolished after it had lasted only three years. The Dic-

tators also were only occasionally called into existence; sometimes for a single day: their longest term of power at one time was fifteen years! The government by Tribunes was also frequently interrupted. But the addition of the Triumvirs would have spoiled the theory. There is also another fatal objection to it, arising from the fact of the Consular power never having been formally abrogated by the accession of Tribunes or Dictators: they were merely supplemental to it.* The government by Consuls, indeed, was the only properly established form among the Romans, from the expulsion of the Tarquins until the reign of Augustus, when the office became a mere title.

Similar objections, more or less weighty, may be made to all other schemes of enumeration hitherto advanced.

Of the seven heads, the angel says, "Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space." A proper knowledge of the time to which the vision refers, may help us to the meaning of the phrase "five are fallen," and so lead to the true enumeration of the seven. The time can only be that in which John lived in Patmos, and saw all the visions he has recorded; *or* the time in which the incident of the particular vision he is then beholding will eventually take place in the future history of the world.

Now, every attentive reader of this chapter will perceive, that John was then beholding a representation of that which *was to come*—that this wonderful vision is described by the angel, as it would in a future day be manifested on the earth. When the angel explains the mystery to the Apostle, we see him, as it were, pointing to the Beast and its rider, saying, "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth; and there are seven

* It may also be urged, that if the Dictators, Tribunes, and Decemvirs superseded the Consuls, as distinct heads or forms of government, then each revival of the Consular government ought to be viewed as another head;—and thus we should have more than twice seven heads before the accession of the Emperors.

kings, five are fallen and one is." We can scarcely imagine, that the angel would, without some distinct and unmistakeable notification, draw away the attention of the Apostle from the marvellous scene on which he was gazing in spirit, to tell him the actual condition of the existing Roman empire!—that he was now living under its sixth form of government! This appears to be equally unlikely and unnecessary. And it is difficult to believe, that St. John could understand the angel as referring to any other time than that indicated by the appearance of the mysterious woman in the vision—unknown as yet upon the earth; but who should eventually seduce the nations into idolatry, rule the world at her will, and be drunken with the blood of the saints.

The history of the Papacy informs us how and when these things took place. We know it was not until the middle ages; when the Emperors of Germany were proclaimed and acknowledged by the Popes themselves as Emperors of Rome; and exercised in that city, by their representative, the power of life and death.* These Emperors, then, must be the Sixth Head—the one that is referred to by the angel as existing at the time indicated by the vision. The other, "not yet come," was to "continue a short space:"—meaning, undoubtedly, a shorter space than any that had gone before him. But this could not have been said, if the Decemvirs had been contemplated as one of the fallen five; for they, as I have already stated, existed only for three years.

Having thus in some degree ascertained the meaning of the angel, we turn now to history, and find the real forms of Government in the Roman empire to have been—

1st, Kings, who reigned 244 years, from B. C. 753, to 509.

2nd, Consuls, who governed Rome with few interruptions (such gaps as occur in the line of Popes, or as Regencies in a Kingdom) for 477 years, till B. C. 31.

3rd, Pagan Emperors, who reigned for about 300 years.

4th, Christian Emperors, under whom the Roman people under-

* See Elliott, p. 845, note.

went a greater change in laws, in religion and manners, than they had ever previously experienced.* So that this was truly a distinct head or form of Government, which lasted till the year 476, that is, above 170 years.

5th, The Exarchs, when Rome was reduced to a Dukedom, and paid tribute to the Exarchate of Ravenna. Bishop Newton adopts the Exarchs as the seventh head. "These Governors of Ravenna," says Gibbon, "extended their jurisdiction as supreme magistrates over the Roman City." "Eighteen successive Exarchs were invested in the decline of the empire, (he adds) with the full remains of civil, of military, and even of ecclesiastical power. The provinces acknowledged in peace and war their supremacy, and Rome was oppressed by their iron sceptre."† They existed about 120 years, and then received a deadly wound from the sword of the barbarous Lombards, by whom the empire was nearly extinguished. These five had fallen; their headship had terminated before the Woman or Popery began to "reign over the kings of the earth."

The 6th Head, was the German Emperors, who reigned above 1000 years, as Emperors of Rome, from the coronation of Charlemagne in 800, till the resignation of the title by Francis in 1806. This head was the one exhibited by the angel as existing when the vision was presented before St. John in spirit.

The 7th Head, was Napoleon Buonaparte, Emperor of the French and King of Italy, and who created his son King of Rome.

* "Diocletian had formed a new system of imperial government, which was afterward completed by the family of Constantine; and as the image of the old constitution was religiously preserved in the senate, he resolved to deprive that order of its small remains of power and consideration."—"Constantine gave the fatal blow to the dignity of the senate and people." "His *new system* of policy and religion was not perfectly established till the last and peaceful years of his reign."—Gibbon, vol. ii., pp. 36, 89, 99. See also ch. xlv.

† Gibbon, vol. v., p. 419.

"France," says Sir W. Scott, "became the successor to the influence and dignity of the *Holy Roman Empire*, as that of Germany had been proudly styled for 1000 years, and the empire of Napoleon gained a near resemblance to that of Charlemagne. France succeeded to the Imperial influence exercised by Austria over all the south-western provinces of Europe."

But the angel had said of the seventh, "when he cometh, he must continue a short space." And Napoleon's empire lasted only eight years, from 1806 to 1814. It was truly a short space!

These I believe to have been the seven Kings, or seven Heads of the Beast.

But who, or what is to be the eighth? The angel tells John, "the Beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." Faber thinks it is the revival of the French Emperorship, and that the first French empire was the head wounded to death. But Buonaparte was no more wounded to death than the German empire he had himself dissolved, or that of the old Roman, which was terminated by the sword of the Ostrogoths. It is a power not yet manifested, but may come *suddenly*. It was in existence formerly, and is not, and yet shall come. The nations which formed the body of the Beast have always existed in Europe, since the beginning of the Empire, but have not always existed in the same decemregal form which appeared to St. John; for they had been raised by the power and genius of Charlemagne from an abyss of anarchy,* and restored to order and civilization. These nations then, banded together, not as formerly by force and compulsion, but by a voluntary compact, under some chosen leader, will form the eighth! For it is expressly said of the ten Kings or horns, "they have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the Beast" (not unto the Woman or Papacy); and this Beast is declared by the angel to be "the eighth" and of "the seven,"—that is, a temporal government ruling over the nations of Papal Europe, as all the seven had done before it. And this at once

* Miley's Papal States, ii. 16.

excludes the Pope from the eighth headship ; for his power is not temporal, but spiritual, and altogether *unlike* the former seven ; therefore cannot be of them.

Besides, this vision points to the overthrow, to the utter destruction of the Woman or Papal power ; which will be effected in a violent manner by these combined Kings. She had formerly ruled over them, and compelled them to do her will. But this latter part of the angel's explanation, indicates, that now they shall hate her, and burn her with fire.

Of these ten Kings it is declared, "they have received no kingdom as yet, but receive power as Kings one hour with the beast."

The solution of this passage has been found very difficult. In the connection in which the words stand, it seems that these kings do not yet exist ; but when the eighth head is manifested, then they shall be raised up, and receive power at the same time, or during the same short season. But this manifestation will involve a most astounding change throughout the whole of Europe ; and the overthrow of nearly all the present continental dynasties. And yet, it is no more than what the contemplation of the pouring out of the seventh vial has led us to expect. The "mighty earthquake," which is only one of its results, will shake to pieces the whole political fabric, rending Europe asunder, and causing the cities of the nations to fall. We may understand this more clearly by referring to the changes effected on the continent by the elder Napoleon, who pulled down one king and raised up another, according to his pleasure, and in a remarkably short space of time. There are many who believe, that the *present Emperor of the French* is destined to effect still greater changes, which will lead to mightier results ; and that he is, in fact, the coming eighth head of the Beast ; to whom the ten kings shall unanimously and voluntarily "give their power and strength." It is remarkable, that *he even now rules in Rome*, and maintains the Pope in his seven-hilled seat of power, by French bayonets. This, of itself, is a significant proof of his Headship.

Ten horns or kingdoms has been the usual number into which the nations of the empire have been divided, ever since the establish-

ment of Popery as the dominant religion. . Frequent changes have taken place, but the number has generally remained the same. The present existing ten Roman Catholic States are,—1, Belgium ; 2, France ; 3, Spain ; 4, Portugal ; 5, Austria ; 6, Bavaria ; 7, Sardinia ; 8, Naples ; 9, Tuscany ; 10, The Papal States.

How the coming ten may be named or divided, it is impossible to foretell. We know, however, that the elements of change and strife abound in every Continental state ; and should the threatened hostilities commence in the East, the smouldering fires of Revolution may suddenly burst into a flame through the whole of western Europe ; and divide it into new kingdoms, under other names ; and then, perhaps, under the leadership of France, to whom, with "one mind, they shall give their power and strength,"* (as the last and final form of the Beast), they shall proceed to execute the wonderful purposes of the Almighty ; to give unto "great Babylon the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath,"—(xvi. 19.) For the angel declares, that "God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will" concerning her—"and to agree, and give their power and strength unto the Beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

The overthrow of the Papacy is here declared ; and the extinction of her power throughout the dominions of the ten kings. The language used is very emphatic—"they shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire :"—seize upon her wealth, and confiscate her

* The events that are now taking place, render it highly probable that Napoleon III. will obtain supremacy over the Continental States, and thus become the predicted Eighth Head of the Beast ; as in France he already combines in himself the whole power of the State, and the people are "transformed into cyphers with one figure at their head." France was the original kingdom of Charlemagne's empire, as well as of the empire of Napoleon I. : and the prominent place she now occupies, and the temper and genius of her present ruler, plainly point to more vigorous efforts and a more widely extended policy, that may again raise her to sit as a queen among the nations. Her power apparently will be increased by the fatuity of the other Continental potentates, and the revolt of their subjects, rather than by their actual subjugation.

possessions, desecrate her temples, and banish or destroy her priests;—similar to the treatment she experienced in France during the first Revolution. This was the great object which John was called into the wilderness to see. It was not merely the grandeur and power of the woman drunken with the blood of the saints—but her fearful *punishment*, that was to be exhibited. “Come hither,” said the angel, “I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.”

The complete and final overthrow of the state and city of Rome, or the seat of the Papacy, is prefigured in another vision recorded in the next chapter, and seems designed to be effected by a distinct and altogether different agency. (See 2 Thess. ii. 8.)

But these ten kings and the Beast, will *afterwards* attempt another work of a different nature—in which they shall not succeed. “They shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.” This will be the end of the Beast, and of the gathering together of the kings of the earth and of the whole world, “to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” This is set before us more distinctly, and in greater detail, in the vision recorded in the 19th chapter, and will come under our notice in the next Lecture.

By this war with the Lamb,—or attack upon those who worship the Lamb—we must conclude, that “men will still blaspheme God;” that the spirit animating the kings, however fiercely it may burn against Popery, will be equally hostile to Protestantism; that it will be the old spirit of the Dragon or Infidelity—ever opposed to the truth; and now rising with a mighty effort to crush it at a blow. But “the people imagine a vain thing,” when “the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed.” For “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. He shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

May we, who look for these things—we, who are watching, as it were, the shadows of the coming struggle—may we “be wise,”

and "serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling: kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and we perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

"Blessed Jesus, we implore thee,
Let us, cleans'd and purified,
Walk in grace and truth before thee,
And in thee by faith abide;
Sanctified
Both in body and in mind."

LECTURE XX.

THE JUDGMENT OF BABYLON THE GREAT.—“COME OUT OF HER.”—
LAMENTATION AND REJOICING OVER HER.—THE BLOOD OF THE
SAINTS.—TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.—ONENESS OF JEWS AND
GENTILES.—ST. JOHN AND THE ANGEL.—VISION OF THE FAITHFUL
AND TRUE.—THE WAR AGAINST HIM AND HIS FOLLOWERS.—DE-
STRUCTION OF THE BEAST, THE FALSE PROPHET, AND THEIR ARMIES,
—(REVELATION XVIII. XIX.)

“AND after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her. And the kings

of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city ! for in one hour is thy judgment come. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her ; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls ! For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city ! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness : for in one hour is she made desolate. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets ; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great milstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee ; and the sound

of a milstone shall be heard no more at all in thee ; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee : for thy merchants were the great men of the earth ; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."—(ch. xviii.)

In this chapter, we have a detailed explanation of an expression in the 16th chapter, where it is said, after the seventh angel poured out his vial, "Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." The awful judgment there predicted, will be made manifest in a striking manner to all nations : it had been foretold again and again, as if to call special attention to this great work which the Almighty is about to do in the earth ; and now a mighty angel, lightening the earth with his glory, as he descends from heaven, announces the fall, and proclaims the crimes, of this great oppressor of the Church, and corrupter of the Gospel.

To no city, to no state, to no church, can the description given in this chapter apply, but to Papal Rome. Roman Catholic writers indeed have applied it to Rome of the Pagans, but that city was never thrown down with violence, like a milstone into the sea, and found no more at all. As is well known, the city of the Emperors gradually became the capital of the Popes ; and it suffered more from the hand of violence after it became Christian, than it had ever done while it remained Pagan. But both as Pagan and as Papal, it well deserved the title of "Babylon the Great."

The predicted judgment, refers, in the first place, to Rome as a "habitation of devils," and "the hold of every foul spirit," and a "cage of every unclean and hateful bird,"—which strikingly describes her present condition, as filled with images of demons, or idols of saints, in every corner, and swarming with unclean monks of every name and colour—besides ecclesiastics so numerous as to be in the proportion of one for every seventeen of the population ;—and yet so depraved and sunk in vice is this city of the Popes and

the capital of Christendom, that its inhabitants are spoken of as the vilest in all Italy; though Italy ranks lower in the scale of morality than any nation in Europe. Her sins, like those of Sodom, have "reached unto heaven"—and a similar fate is awaiting her.

But the prediction refers not merely to Rome as a city, but to Rome as a State and a Church, to its polity and government, its power and influence. In these respects, as well as in its name, the Babylon of the Apocalypse bears a close resemblance to the literal Babylon,—that ancient oppressor of the Church; and strikingly similar is the language employed in denouncing its doom, as if the one were the type of the other.* For thus saith the prophet Jeremiah, (li. 7, &c.) "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad. Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed: howl for her; take balm for her; if so she may be healed. Her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies. (13) O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures; thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. (25) Behold I am against thee, O destroying mountain, saith the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and make thee a burnt mountain. (37) And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and an hissing, without an inhabitant. (48) Then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein shall sing for Babylon: for as

* Ezekiel predicted a similar judgment upon ancient Tyre.—See chapters xxvii. and xxviii. Her prince, like the Papal Antichrist, lifted up his heart, and said, "I am a god, I sit in the seat of God," (comp. 2 Thess. ii. 4,) but the Lord said, "Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic: therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."—Ezek. xxviii. 18, 19.

Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth:"—and to mark still more strongly its utter and irretrievable ruin, Jeremiah said to Seraiah, (63) "When thou hast made an end of reading this book, thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates; and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her."

But in the midst of judgment God remembered mercy, he thought upon his own covenant people who were held captive within her walls, and warned them to escape. Like the warning voice which St. John heard from heaven addressed to the unwilling dwellers in the spiritual Babylon, so Jeremiah cried to the captive Israelites, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity;" and again Zechariah (ii. 6, 7,) repeated the warning cry, "Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the Lord,—deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon." The Jews were not unmindful of this admonition; nor were the Christians slow to remember a similar exhortation given to them by our Lord himself, to flee from the impending destruction, when they saw Jerusalem encompassed with armies. And now, in our own day, is not the warning voice repeated again and again, in louder and louder tones,—“Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues?” And the cry is not repeated in vain; for never, since the days of the Reformation, has there been such a shaking among the dry bones of Popery as at the present moment:—proving to all who have ears to hear, the *truth* of the prophecy, the justness of its application, and the imminency of the judgment. Thousands have already “come out of her” in Ireland. The Gospel is spreading in “Catholic” Christendom. The Bible has not been distributed in vain. It is leavening whole masses of men in Spain, in France, and in Italy.* The in-

* In the Crimea, thousands of Italian Bibles and Testaments have been sold, and are eagerly read by the Sardinian soldiers.

tolerant bigotry of Tuscany may well be forgiven, when we know that more than 20,000 of her people have ranged themselves on the side of Protestantism—that Piedmont is again emerging out of Papal darkness, its capital alone numbering 8,000 "apostates,"—and that the ancient Waldensian Church, delivered from the fetters which so long have bowed her to the dust, and animated anew by the Spirit from on high, has now come forth as in the days of old, "witnessing for Jesus," and testifying against the "Mystery of iniquity." She has entered on a high and holy mission, the evangelization of Italy—the headquarters of Popery. And to those who know the truth, but have not the courage to forsake the communion of error, she has raised the warning cry, and calls from her alpine towers, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partaker of her plagues." For the doom of Babylon will be unexpected as well as terrible. At a time when she shall say "in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow."

And, certainly, in the Papal world, there is at present no anticipation of such a catastrophe. The Romanists are boasting of their increase: their hierarchy enjoy an influence and consideration greater than any they have possessed during the last sixty years: they are constantly referring to Rome as the "Eternal city," and to the dominion of the Popes which has existed above 1200 years, while all the dynasties of Europe have been shattered and changed around them:—and with blinded confidence they predict a reign which shall increase in glory and stability, till the consummation of all things.*

* "One may be tempted to apprehend," says Dr. Miley, "that, in the interpretations of prophecy, so much in vogue, there is possibly some mistake; and that, perhaps, after all, it was to this singular realm, [the Papal States,] so weak and unstable, to all appearance, so incessantly assailed during a thousand years, and yet surviving, the prophet pointed, when he said, 'But in the days of these kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people.'"—*Papal States*, vol. iii. p. 670.

The Protestant historian Macaulay, seems to entertain a nearly similar

But notwithstanding all this pride and presumption, the decree has gone forth, "With violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all." For her plagues are described as coming suddenly—"in *one day*, death and mourning and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire."

The "one day" may signify, as in other passages of the Apocalypse, one year. For her burning is to be preceded by famine and death within the city. Probably in consequence of a siege, or of the cutting off her supplies by those nations or kings, who are described in the foregoing chapter, as having thrown off the Popish yoke, and hating the whore, and making her desolate, and "burning her with fire."

But the kings of the earth, in this chapter, are said to lament and bewail, when they see the smoke of her burning; and therefore the general opinion is, that the destruction of Rome by fire, will be the immediate act of the Almighty himself. It is indeed asserted by many writers, that the combustibles for her destruction are already prepared, for the whole country round about Rome is

opinion. "The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday," he says, "when compared with the line of Roman Pontiffs.—The Papacy remains, not in decay—not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth, to the farthest ends of the world, missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age.—Nor do we see any sign that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments, and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the French had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca; and she may still exist in undiminished vigour, when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

of a volcanic nature, and has attracted the attention of travellers as the probable scene of such a catastrophe. But though her final destruction may be like that of Sodom and Gomorrah, by fire from heaven descending on the sulphur beneath, yet the kings of the earth may be the agents of her previous calamities (impelled by their hatred and rage); and then, when the evil is beyond their controul, when the destruction becomes complete and irretrievable, it is quite consistent with human nature, that they should bewail her doom!

As in the fall of the literal Babylon, the destruction of the city involved the overthrow of the government, and the up-rooting of her power—so also it is intimated in the predicted doom of her spiritual antitype. Her influence over the nations, which she had obtained by her “cunning craftiness,”—by making them drunk with her poisonous wine—is at an end. The pomp and splendour of her sensuous and ceremonial worship is gone for ever—and there is no more need of her gold and silver cups and candlesticks—the gorgeous robes of her priests—nor the gaudy deckings of her shrines and altars;—nor the supply of “slaves” and “souls” for her convents and monasteries. She is left naked and desolate. Therefore “the merchants of the earth” are represented as standing afar off, and joining in the wailing cry, “Alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet; for in one hour so great riches is come to nought.”

But while these lament, there are others who shall rejoice. Even as Jeremiah had predicted of the ancient Babylon, when the Lord executed judgment upon her; “then the heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing.” So St. John hears the voice of exultation over the spiritual oppressor of the nations: “Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath *avenged* you on her.” (ver. 20) This is the long expected answer to the souls under the altar, who were “slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held.” They had cried with a loud voice, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?”

—and it was said unto them, that they should *rest*, until their fellow-servants “should be killed as they were.” They were those who fell by the sword of Pagan Rome; and were few in number compared with the multitudes who were destroyed by the Papal Beast, during the time “it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them,” because they would not “worship the image of the Beast”—that likeness of Pagan idolatry which the Popes have fashioned and vivified, and substituted for the pure and holy religion,*—the worship “in spirit and in truth,”—which alone the Father requireth.

Because they thus obeyed God rather than man—because they resisted the usurpations of the Papacy—history attests, and the advocates of Romanism cannot deny it, that at least a million of protesting Christians fell during the thirteenth century;—that within thirty years after the institution of the order of the Jesuits, the blood of 900,000 heretics was shed. The Duke of Alva boasted that he had, in the Netherlands, delivered 36,000 Protestants into the hands of the common hangman: and the Inquisition destroyed 150,000 victims, during the first thirty years of its establishment. In the year 1572 the Pope offered up public thanksgivings to God for the cowardly assassination of 100,000 French Protestants on St. Bartholomew’s and the two following days. Many other proofs of the cruel spirit of Popery might be adduced from the history of our own country, of Ireland, of Spain, and of France.† But, in fact, the same spirit still exists in the present day—the precepts of persecution are still taught by the Romish Church; and a large party in France are even now advocating the extermination of

* The dedication at Rome of the *Pantheon*, the temple of all the Pagan gods, to the *Virgin Mary and all the Saints*, A. D. 604, was a sign, very notable, of this substitution of a new form of heathen worship, albeit in Christendom, for the old.”—*Horæ Apoc.* ii. p. 538.

† “Rome is calculated to have shed, in all, the blood of sixty-eight millions of the human race.”—*The Mystery Solved*, &c., p. 145. By the Rev. E. M. Dill.

heretics, justifying the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and eulogizing the dragoonades of Louis XIV. And ought we to wonder at this, when we know that the "sacred canons" and "Apostolical constitutions" of Popes and Councils, by which all these barbarous deeds were sanctified, are still in force—not one has been repealed: and *by them*, according to the words of the statute, "the secular powers are compelled, to the utmost of their power, to expel, and utterly to exterminate, all heretics from the lands subject to their jurisdiction."* "In her," therefore, in Babylon the great, the seat of the Papacy,—*"in her,"* as the mighty angel declared, "was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." The long-suffering of the Lord—his patience and forbearance during the suffering ages of the Church—has been very mysterious. His elect have been crying day and night, and the enemy still triumphs:—"but he will avenge them speedily." The time seems to be at hand when "this mystery of God shall be finished;" and "he shall give reward unto his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear his name, small and great, and shall destroy them which destroy the earth." Looking at the present spirit of the apostate Church, and at the awful denunciations of impending destruction against her, which we have been considering; we may say of her, as our Lord said of the Jews in his day, "Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers;"—and therefore, "the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, shall be required of this generation."

"And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders

* 4th Council of Lateran, 1215.

and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen ; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him : for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white : for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he said unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”—(ch. xix. 1—9.)

It appears from this vision, that on the overthrow of Babylon, or the Papal power, there will be a great increase in the numbers of the true Church. For so we may understand the meaning of the phrase “much people in heaven,” to signify. This will doubtless arise, partly from the multitudes now in the Roman communion who shall obey the call, “Come out of her, my people ;” and partly from the numbers without the pale of Christendom who shall then join themselves to the Lord. It has also been supposed, from the repetition of the Hebrew word “Alleluia,” which signifies “Praise Jehovah,” that the restoration of the Jews is here indicated, and that their belief in Jesus as the Messiah, and union with the Christian Church, will now take place. St. Paul says, “they shall be brought in with the fulness of the Gentiles :” and at what period can we suppose this to be effected, if not at the time indicated in the vision before us ? And indeed several of the Jewish Rabbis have stated their belief, that the restoration of Israel will immediately follow the fall of Rome : this is also the opinion of many Christian commentators. And the Old Testament prophecies abound in declarations of their return in the latter days : for at that time, saith the Lord, “a new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. And ye shall

dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.”—(Ezek. xxxvi. 26—28.)

In the Apocalypse, however, there is no mention of Jewish believers as distinct from Christians; but the tribes of Israel and the temple service are used as types and symbols of the New Testament church, indicating the oneness that must subsist among the family of believers, whose Head and Great High Priest has passed into heaven. In this family “all are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus,” and there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, for “all are one in him.” Nevertheless, as a nation, the Jews will doubtless be highly distinguished, as God’s peculiar people; and again, in their own land, realize those temporal and spiritual blessings which have been interrupted and postponed, but which God will pour out upon them in all their fulness, according to the covenant he made with their father Abraham.

The multitudes in the Church, both Jews and Gentiles, are represented in this glorious vision as uniting in songs of praise to God, for avenging the blood of his servants, and establishing his kingdom upon the earth. In this joyful service, they are joined by the “church of the first-born in heaven”—the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures, saying “Amen, Alleluia;” while the hosts of angels, (who have been learning, by the Church, the manifold wisdom of God, and desiring to look into the mystery of salvation,) swell the triumphant chorus as with “the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

But the vision not only indicates great joy in the Church, and a large accession to her numbers, but also a union of spirit, a harmony of doctrine, and a purity of life, such as have never existed since the saints assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem. The Church is here represented as prepared for the “coming of her Lord.” “The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready: and to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white.” The different sects and

parties which now distract and disfigure the Church, will then all be merged in one. Judah will no longer vex Ephraim, nor Ephraim envy Judah: the peculiarities of doctrine and discipline—the distinctions of dress and ceremonies—will all be melted and absorbed in the fervent love of Jesus; while a simple faith in his atonement, and a growing conformity to his likeness, will pervade the heart and the life of her members;—for this is the fine linen, the righteousness of saints.

Then will the Church become what her Lord desires—"a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish."

The intimate union that shall then subsist between the visible Church on earth and her glorified Head, is set forth by the marriage supper of the Lamb; to which state of blessedness St. John's attention is especially called. He is commanded to write; and the angel tells him that "these are the true sayings of God:" as if to give certain assurance to believers, that however distressed and obscured and divided the Church may be now, yet a time of blessedness and glory, of love and light, of harmony and oneness, is at hand, marvellous and incomprehensible though it may appear.

St. John himself was so overpowered by the revelation of this future happiness of the Church, that he fell down at the feet of the angel to worship him.

Verse 10.—"But he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and the fellow-servant of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: Worship God; for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The angel in his revelation, and St. John in his life and doctrine, witnessed or testified for Jesus; and, saith the Apostle, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself," and is, therefore, fellow-servant with the angel. And yet, the "mystery of iniquity" teaches, (among other things contrary to the word of God,) a degrading and voluntary humility, in the worshipping of angels.

But before the Church can enjoy the blessedness now set before her, another enemy has yet to be overcome.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth; and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."—(ver. 11—21.)

Some writers in the present day, maintain that this vision ought to be understood literally)—that it "distinctly proves the *personal* coming of Christ and his saints from heaven to destroy the beast and the false prophet." But this mode of interpretation is at

variance with the way in which the visions have been understood that have had their fulfilment already. For surely no one will assert that the descriptions of the horses and their riders in the 6th chapter were literal facts. They were evidently symbolical. And in the same chapter, the great changes which are figuratively indicated on the opening of the sixth seal, help us to understand the meaning of the vision now under consideration. There the overthrow of the enemies of the Church is predicted, and they are represented as hiding themselves from the wrath of the Lamb. That vision, we believe, was fulfilled when Paganism fell before Christianity, under the emperor Constantine. The present vision is equally symbolical, and no doubt will receive its full accomplishment in a similar manner, by the complete destruction of Popery and Infidelity, in their attempt to overthrow Christianity—which will then be established throughout the whole world.

The kings and their armies in this vision, are evidently the same as those mentioned in the 16th chapter, who were raised up by the influence of the spirits from the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet—or by the combined agency of Infidelity, Despotism, and Superstition. They were to be gathered together to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And, in the 17th chapter, they are described as giving their power and strength unto the Beast, or rather to its eighth enigmatical head; and as "hating the whore," or mysterious Woman, who had formerly deceived them, and ruled over them—making her "desolate and naked:" signifying the overthrow of Popery throughout the whole of Christendom, as it was overthrown in France during the first Revolution. The last act of these kings and armies, as predicted in the 17th chapter, is their "war with the Lamb." This war is the great subject of the vision now recorded in the chapter before us. It seems also to be the same as the vintage and "winepress of the wrath of God," which forms the closing vision in the 14th chapter. This great and final catastrophe is brought before us again and again by the Spirit of the Lord—to fix the attention of the Church upon it;

to induce them to watch for the signs of its coming; and to be prepared for this overwhelming event. "Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments."

Throughout the Old Testament prophecies many intimations are given of the assembling of the nations of the earth, to destroy the people of the Lord, and of the awful and irretrievable destruction which will overtake them in the land of Israel. As in the third chapter of Joel—"I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe, the press is full, the fats overflow, for their wickedness is great." "And I will execute vengeance," says Micah, "in anger and fury upon the heathen, such as they have not heard." "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart," saith Isaiah, "and the year of my redeemed is come—and I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."—"For by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many."

The armies of Gog and Magog, described by Ezekiel as coming in the latter days against the land of Israel—where they shall be overwhelmed with "pestilence and blood," and "fire and brimstone,"—are considered by some as identical with the kings and the armies of the Apocalypse, who shall make war against the "Faithful and True." Similar is the description of the slaughter, and similar the language in which the fowls of the air are invited to the sacrifice. Other commentators, however, refer the invasion of Gog and Magog to a time after the close of the Millennium; as if they were the same with the Gog and Magog of the 20th chapter, who shall be gathered together by Satan when he is loosed out of prison.*

However that may be, it seems intimated that the scene of the

* See Lecture XXII.

last great war, previous to the Millennium, will be the land of Judea: "the wine-press will be trodden without the city," or beyond the boundaries of the Papal empire; and the kings assembled will be not only those of the Papal earth, but "of the whole world," as is shewn in the 16th chapter.

In a previous Lecture, I have mentioned the remarkable signs which seem to indicate the proximity of this event. Especially the immense armies that are now gathered together, not only in Europe but even in the regions of the East. Armies of such magnitude never before existed on the face of the earth; and however they may be separated or even opposed to each other at present—however Christendom may be ravaged and rent by their operations hereafter—yet we believe they will eventually be united and gathered together "against the Lord and against his anointed." When we see this union of the continental and other armies, followed by the overthrow of the spiritual Babylon, then we may be sure that Satan will immediately lead them forth on his last grand enterprise against the Protestant Church.

But her mighty Head—the King of kings and Lord of lords,—will not fail her in the day of battle. His interference and his power will be manifested in a striking, perhaps miraculous manner. For the description by St. John, of the heaven opening, and the appearance of the white horse and his glorious rider, leading the armies of heaven—denotes a display of divine power, such as was vouchsafed to king Jehoshaphat, when "the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel:" (2 Chr. xx. 29.)—or His more miraculous interposition, when Joshua encountered the kings of the Amorites; on that day when the sun stood still, and "the Lord cast down great stones from heaven," so that "more died by the hailstones, than the children of Israel slew with the sword."

Indeed, as if to draw our attention to that wonderful exhibition of the power of Israel's King and Lord, on their first entering into the land of Canaan; and to lead the Christian Church to expect similar assistance in her final conflict; it is said, in the out-pouring of the seventh vial, (of which this and the previous chapter are

only more ample descriptions,) that "there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

The followers of the King are also represented as riding on white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. These are the emblems of their victory and sanctity. There is no division in their ranks. There will then be a close union of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, against the common enemy—a union doubtless accelerated by the imminency of the common danger;—it will be a truly "Evangelical alliance," not an agreement to differ;—it will be that oneness of heart and sentiment, of object and interest, for which our Saviour prayed—a oneness such as subsists between the Father and the Son. A Church so united by the bonds of love contains within itself all the elements of millennial blessedness, and is already prepared for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

But there is another supper prepared, called "the supper of the great God," to which all the fowls of heaven are invited, by an "angel standing in the sun." This signifies the wide-spreading destruction, the multitudinous slaughter that will ensue, and the universal attention that will be given, throughout the whole world, to the events of the coming struggle. For *all* have a deep interest in the result, not only Protestants and Romanists, but Jews and Mohammedans, Greeks and Barbarians;—for in that great day, saith the prophet, the very "*heathen* shall know that I am the Lord," and "I will be sanctified in the eyes of many nations,"—and "the house of Israel shall *know* that I am the Lord their God, from that day and forward."

St. John, in vision, witnesses the battle and its results. The antichristian powers, civil and ecclesiastical, with "their armies gathered together," are overthrown by "him that sat upon the horse;" and "the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him," that is, the spirit of Popery, which will still exist, and the spirit of despotism, or perhaps their chief leaders. These are "cast alive into a lake of fire burning

with brimstone." This is the end of the "mystery of iniquity," that "Wicked" concerning which St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians as "already working," "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders," but "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

"The false prophet that wrought miracles before the beast," is an exhibition of Popery in the closing scenes of its existence—when the 1260 years of its predicted duration are about to expire. In its earlier career, as depicted by the lamb-like two-horned Beast of the 13th chapter, it not only did "great wonders," and deceived mankind by its miracles, but it also exercised all the power of the first Beast, and compelled the earth to worship the "image," or resuscitation of the old Pagan idolatry. Afterward we see it, in the 17th chapter, in all its strength and grandeur,—riding on the Beast—guiding and controlling the nations of Christendom—converting their power to its own purposes—and drunken with the blood of the saints. But now, it has been thrown from its seat: it no longer rules over the nations, nor wields the power which it once possessed. It is represented merely as a *false prophet*, assuming supernatural powers. This is, indeed, the characteristic of Popery at the present moment: it is as a prophet, teaching lies, and deceiving by its pretended miracles. And though the Papacy may be destroyed, and Rome itself burned with fire from heaven, yet more and greater miracles may still be performed by the spirit of Popery, than the world has hitherto witnessed. The great Deceiver appears, in the present day, to have established new and extraordinary mediums of communication between mankind and the invisible world. The spirits of evil are roaming the earth: and our Lord himself has warned us, that "in the latter days, false prophets shall arise and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch, that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

The Beast—the companion of the False Prophet—occupies a large space in the revelation made to St. John, of the things which were

to come. This Beast, under different aspects, has signified the great Roman empire, animated by the Dragon or Satan, and also the same empire, filled with the spirit of Popery: both body and spirit are now cast into the lake of fire. This is likewise exhibited with great clearness in the prophecies of Daniel. There, the fourth beast, is called *a kingdom*, and it is described as terrible, and stronger than any that had preceded it; and having ten horns, or kings:—and because of the voice of the great words, against the Most High, which one of those kings spake in the latter days, “the Beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame.” And thus, it is foreshewn, in the symbolical language of the Old Testament and of the New, that the Roman Catholic superstitions, and the Roman Catholic governments, shall alike be extinguished for ever, and their memory remain as a warning and “an abhorring unto all flesh.” (Isa. lxvi.).

The followers of the Beast and the False Prophet are finally described as “slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse.” This, we may conclude, represents the complete rout and irretrievable ruin of the armies of Antichrist that shall be gathered together to make war against the Church of God. But it is questioned whether a violent death by the sword is here predicted to the “remnant.” The rider on the horse is symbolical, and so is the sword which proceedeth out of his mouth, and may denote the slaying of their enmity to the cross of Christ, and their falling before the sword of the Spirit, “the word of God,” which is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword. We must remember, however, that our Lord himself makes use of the same figure, to represent sharp and sudden punishment. “Repent,” he says to the Church of Pergamos, “or else I will come unto thee quickly; and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.” Hence, we may believe, that judgments, sharp and severe, will be executed upon the adherents of the beast and the false prophet; especially, as it is added, “all the fowls were filled with their flesh.” They lie helpless as carcases, on the field of battle. This signifies their entire deprivation of all power, rank, and influence, and the seizure

and distribution of their wealth and possessions by those who have overcome them. For now, on the overthrow of Popery and Infidelity, and the destruction of those who have corrupted the earth, God will give reward to his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear his name, small and great. The word of the Lord will mightily prevail, and Christianity arise triumphant. A change will come over the spirit of political opinions, and the nations will be governed by the principles of the Gospel; and Jesus, the Conqueror of the world, shall establish His reign of peace and truth and righteousness. "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."—(Dan. vii. 27.)

Hail to the Lord's Anointed!
Great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression
To set the captive free;
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.
Arabia's desert ranger
To him shall bow the knee;
The Ethiopian stranger
His glory come to see:
With offerings of devotion
Ships from the isles shall meet,
To pour the wealth of ocean
In tribute at his feet.
Kings shall fall down before him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore him,
His praise all people sing:
For He shall have dominion
O'er river, sea, and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion,
Or dove's light wing can soar.

O'er every foe victorious,
He on His throne shall rest;
From age to age more glorious,
All blessing and all blest:
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove:
His name shall stand for ever,
His great, best name of love.

LECTURE XXI.

THE BINDING OF SATAN.—THE FIRST RESURRECTION.—THE MILLENNIUM.
—THE REIGN OF CHRIST AND THE SAINTS.—THE CONDITION OF THE
EARTH AND ITS INHABITANTS.—STATE OF THE CHURCH.—RESTORA-
TION OF THE JEWS.—REVELATION XX. 1—6.

“AND I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old Serpent which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”—(xx. 1—3.)

Several of the preliminary events which will usher in the period of millennial blessedness have been brought before us while commenting on the previous chapter;—these were, the overthrow of Popery, the destruction of Rome, and the complete defeat and utter ruin of all the armies of Antichrist, in that day when the Lord “shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips slay the wicked.” (Isa. xi. 4.) The mighty Master spirit, by whom they were mustered and led on to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, is now exhibited in the Apocalypse as seized by an angel, bound with a chain, and cast into the abyss, where he shall be confined for a thousand years. The power of the Prince of this world shall be effectually restrained. The Lord shall rebuke him; and thus shall he be prevented “from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” The certainty of his confinement, and the sureness of his prison house are intimated

by a seal being set upon him—to signify the authority and the power by which he will be held.

The character of Satan is expressed in the object of his confinement—"that he should deceive the nations no more." "From the beginning," he abode not in the truth. "When he speaketh a lie (saith our Lord) he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar and the father of it." He deceived our first parents in Paradise, so that they obeyed the Devil rather than God; and ever since he has filled the world with lying likenesses of heavenly truth. His great object has ever been the corruption of the worship of Jehovah. In this he has succeeded so wonderfully, that he is even called "the God of this world." Satan persuaded Cain to offer the "fruit of the ground," instead of the "firstlings of his flock;" and in the days of Noah, "all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth." After the flood, the spirit of falsehood again deceived the nations; and the altar of the everlasting God was gradually forsaken for the worship of demons, with all its cruel and debasing rites. Even among the Israelites, whom the Lord chose for his peculiar people, the delusions of the Devil prevailed. Again and again they fell into idolatry, notwithstanding they had the written law of God for their admonition and guidance. But never have the power and the craft of Satan been more conspicuous, than in the corruption of Christianity. The pure light from heaven, that shone into the Church of Christ, was gradually obscured by the smoke from the bottomless pit; and, amid the deepening gloom, superstition filled its courts, and covered its walls with shrines, and relics, and pictures, and images; until the deluded worshippers, loving the darkness rather than the light, adored all the idols of Paganism under the name of Christian saints. The outward structure of Christianity was, indeed, preserved, but its beauty was defaced,—all the doctrines of the Gospel were retained, but their glorious light was hidden by the thick vail of human tradition.

Thus has Satan deceived the nations of Christendom, by changing "the truth of God into a lie," and persuading them to worship the

creature rather than the Creator, as the Greek and Roman churches of the present day bear witness.

The great portions of the world still enveloped in the darkness of Paganism, and the millions who follow the standard of Mohammed, prove the vast extent of the Deceiver's dominion, and the wonderful variety and cunning adaptation of his delusions to the wants and circumstances, the barbarism and intelligence, the slavish fears and fond expectations of the different ages and races of the human family. He has deceived the world by "wonders," by pretended miracles, performed through the agency of men who have willingly lent themselves for the accomplishment of his designs.

The "false prophet" of the preceding chapter, was the great instrument in his hand for this purpose; and of the wonders performed in and by the Romish Church, its adherents declare, even in the present day, that "they have no more doubt of the miracles constantly performed within her pale, than they have of the historical existence of our blessed Saviour."* Their belief in the existence of these miracles is, to us, a convincing proof of the apostasy and Satanic character of the Church which performs and believes them! For both St. John and St. Paul have predicted, that the mystery of iniquity shall be "after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders."

What further deception may be practised upon the world, we know not. But we know that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, and "that in the last days perilous times shall come," when "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." Even now, in the present day, the power of the great Deceiver is manifested in an extraordinary manner. He has presented soul-destroying temptations to the intellectual and to the sensual; and the tens of thousands who believe in "Spiritualism" and in "Mormonism," bear witness to his success, and to the credulity of human nature.

* Bowyer.

It behoves professing Christians, therefore, to be on their guard; remembering our Lord's warning; for this may be the beginning of that time of delusion which he foretold: when "false prophets shall arise, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Indicating in the very last days of the present dispensation, a severe trial of the faith of believers, which will stagger and confound many, and which those only shall withstand who keep the Word of Christ's patience; and by that powerful Word are enabled to "*try the spirits* whether they are of God."

But all these systems of deceit, and all the delusions which abound in the world and in the Church, as well as the temptations which we individually experience, will come to a predicted end. For their great author will ere long be shut up in the abyss. A stronger than he has "the keys of hell and of death," and shall "shut him up for a thousand years."

On a former occasion (on ch. ix. 1, 2,) it was shewn that the "key" had special reference to the power given to propagate doctrines—whether true or false—and its symbolical use here may refer, not only to the confinement of Satan himself in that prison which is his appropriate residence, and whence all false doctrines have been derived; but also, to the universal spread of the Gospel throughout the earth—the glorious light shining from the effulgent doctrines of heavenly truth, chasing away the clouds of error and superstition, as the rising sun dissipates the darkness with its morning beams.

"The beast and the false prophet" will first be overthrown in their final attempt to crush the Church. Popery and Infidelity will be utterly destroyed;—and every remaining form of Idolatry and opposition to God will follow in their awful ruin—falling like the great temple of Dagon upon the Philistines, when Samson grasped the two pillars on which the house stood, and "bowed himself with all his might."

The binding of Satan will immediately follow. He will have no time allowed him to restore the fallen fabric of idolatry, nor to

deceive the nations by new wonders and lying vanities. His reign on the earth will expire, and he will not be permitted, for a thousand years, to pollute it with his presence. Thus the world will be prepared for a new era; and a great step will have been made towards the accomplishment of that work, which Christ came upon earth to perform. For the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil; and he became partaker of our nature "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil." When first the kingdom of God began to be proclaimed, "I beheld Satan like lightning fall from heaven," said our Lord. It was the beginning of that work which should eventually overthrow his dominion in the earth—and wherever the Gospel is preached and received, there the bulwarks of Satan are shaken: and at the time prefigured in the chapter before us, his territories will become subject to the King of saints—his power and authority entirely taken away, and he himself, as a conquered usurper, seized and carried captive to the abyss. His *final* destruction will be effected after he shall have deceived the nations once more; when he shall be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and tormented day and night for ever."

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (ver. 4—6.)

It has been asserted by some, that the "first resurrection" here spoken of, must be understood figuratively—that a spiritual, not a literal, rising from the dead is meant. But if spiritual, the general resurrection must be spiritual also; for it is said in the same chap-

ter, "the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished;" and then "John saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." Similar language is used in describing both events—and the latter has always been understood literally. Just as it was understood by the Jews in our Saviour's time, and by St. Paul, when writing to the Corinthians. In like manner, the passages referring to the "first resurrection" have been understood literally by the Church since the beginning of Christianity, as we learn from the writings of the early Fathers.

The doctrine itself is indeed not obscurely intimated in the Old Testament Scriptures. Besides other references, there is a remarkable passage in the book of Daniel, where it is said, that after "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," (evidently referring to those same times wherein the Beast and the False Prophet shall be destroyed) "thy people (says the angel) shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book; and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth (not all of them) *shall awake*, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." And Daniel himself is comforted by the promise, "Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

It was the hope of obtaining this lot that animated St. Paul to press towards the mark, and count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, "if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead," (or, as it might be rendered, "from among the dead.") Evidently not a participation in that general resurrection at the great day of judgment, when *all the dead*, small and great, shall stand before God; but of the first resurrection, of which the partakers are here declared to be "blessed and holy," and shall sit on thrones administering judgment. In strict accordance with the declaration of our Lord to his twelve Apostles, "Ye shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And, whether this refers to the authority they shall possess during the Millennium, or to their participation with Christ in the general judgment, it equally implies a resurrec-

tion and manifestation previous to the final consummation. This also seems to be the meaning of St. Paul, when he says, "the dead in Christ shall rise first." These risen saints are among those mentioned in Daniel as "the saints of the Most High;" who, after the destruction of the kingdoms of the earth, "shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom." (Dan. vii. 18). Even as it is declared in the Apocalypse, "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. xx. 6). And on the expiration of that period, when "the great white throne is set," they shall sit with Christ and "judge the world," as St. Paul tells the Corinthians. Our Lord himself points to this, when he is describing the last judgment, (in Matt. xxv.) The sheep are on his right hand, the goats on his left; but, when addressing the former, He refers to a third party, whom he calls "My brethren," and who appear to be sitting with him as assessors in the judgment, and admirers of his glory. (2 Thess. i. 10). But those who thus sit in judgment upon the "righteous and the wicked" of all nations, must themselves have been previously raised and made partakers of the blessed and holy state implied in the first resurrection; and ought certainly to be identified with those servants of God spoken of in the 11th chapter, "the prophets and the saints, and them that fear his name," to whom He promised to "give reward," when he "should destroy them which destroy the earth;" and who, in the 14th chapter, are called, "the redeemed from among men,—the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb."

Their previous character is also set before us in this chapter (ver. 4), as "the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands." They are the true followers of the Lamb, the "hundred and forty and four thousand sealed ones," who "had fought the good fight, and kept the faith, and finished their course." But the passage especially reminds us of those who had suffered even unto death, and to whom it was said, "they should rest for a little season." Now their rest is over,

and they are called to reign : and not they only, but all who in like manner had sealed their testimony with their blood, or who had been partakers of the like precious faith. Over all these the second death hath no power. Among the glorious company who shall reign with Christ, will also be found that "great cloud of witnesses," spoken of in the Epistle to the Hebrews—the Old Testament saints, who had obtained a good report through faith,—but had not "received the promise" of that "kingdom which cannot be moved;" "God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us, should not be made perfect," adds the Apostle. But they will be made perfect at the first resurrection, when the incorruptible body shall be united to the redeemed spirit. The twenty-four elders who surround the throne of God, as representatives of the Church under both covenants, in their song of praise to the Lamb, anticipate a participation in the same reward, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and *we shall reign on the earth.*"

In the millennial state, then, Abraham and all his faithful posterity will enjoy the realization of the promise that they should inherit the land for ever—even though the father of the faithful "had none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on." All the other distinguishing blessings which Jehovah has promised to his chosen people by Moses and the prophets, and which in their fulness have never yet been enjoyed, will, during the reign of the saints, be poured out upon those who shall "attain unto the resurrection from among the dead," though centuries ago they had been gathered to their fathers.

In the contemplation of the first resurrection and the millennial blessedness of the faithful, we see more clearly the force and meaning of our Saviour's reply to the Sadducees: "That the dead are raised even Moses shewed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him." They lived then as spirits in his presence, and they will live again upon this earth, united to their spiritual bodies, as glorified

saints, inheriting the promises, and "reigning with Christ a thousand years."

"But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?" (2 Chron. vi. 18.) This question, which was asked by Solomon on the dedication of his Temple, is frequently put at the present day, and many of the best and wisest men are divided in the answer. Some affirming positively that Christ will reign personally with his saints on the earth; while others maintain that a spiritual reign only is to be understood by the expressions which refer to his appearance during the Millennium.

That Christ will appear the second time we are all taught to believe; and that he will come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, attended by the holy angels, in like manner as the disciples saw him ascend from Mount Olivet, is an established doctrine. But his coming in that resplendent manner, when every eye shall see him, will be to judge the quick and the dead, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the earth and all things therein shall be burnt up—an event which is spoken of in the Apocalypse as following after the period of millennial blessedness, not as ushering it in.

Still, there are several passages, which, if taken literally, lead to the conclusion, that Jesus shall reign personally on the earth previous to the general judgment. Besides those in the chapter before us, perhaps the strongest is the declaration of our Lord himself to the Apostles, "When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix. 28, comp. xxv. 31.) But this seems to refer rather to the final judgment, which shall take place after the Millennium. The passage, however, and others similar, may have reference to his spiritual reign, as he now walks spiritually in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: even as we are warranted in believing, that it was to the establishment of his *Church* upon the earth, and the abrogation of the Mosaic dispensation, that he referred, when he said to the Jews, "There be some

standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." (Matt. xvi. 28.) For he himself declared "My kingdom is not of this world:"—"The kingdom of God is within you." In this sense we must understand the prediction in the second Psalm, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion;"—and the declaration of the angel to his mother Mary, "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever:"—or else we may conclude, that His *personal* reign on earth is not to commence until after the final judgment. But then the Apostle Paul assures us, that when Christ hath put down all rule and authority and power, and destroyed Death, the last enemy,—that he shall "deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father," and become "subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." His authority as Son of Man—his office as the High Priest and King of his people, will then cease.

Some of the passages brought forward to prove the personal and pre-millennial coming of Christ, appear to be figurative merely of signal deliverances which the Lord will grant to his people. Such are Daniel xii. 1, and Zechariah xiv. 1—5. In the third verse of the latter passage, it is said, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, *as when he fought in the day of battle.*" Here the allusion is evidently to the Lord's wonderful interference in behalf of his people, when they fought against the Amorites under Joshua, (see Joshua, chap. x. 14); and to the overthrow of the host that came against Jehoshaphat: (see 2 Chron. xx. 15, 22.) The opinion of the personal coming of our Lord, therefore, seems to derive no support from these and similar texts of Scripture.

Another passage, adduced to prove the personal reign of Christ on earth during the millennium, is the declaration of St. Peter to the Jews, (Acts iii. 21,) "Jesus Christ—whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things." But this pre-supposes the complete renovation of the world to all its original purity and beauty; and the perfect renewal, in man, of the

image of God, which was defaced by the fall; with free access and "right to the tree of life." This "restitution," however, as we learn from the 21st and 22nd chapters of the Revelation, will not take place till after the general judgment. During the millennium, freedom from sin, and the consequent happiness of man, will not be perfect:—Death will still reign, though man's life shall be prolonged; sinners will still be found, though Satan be restrained; and the restored tranquillity of the world will be again fearfully disturbed, and the earth require a final purification by fire. We may therefore conclude, that, as the "restoration of all things" will not take place during the millennium, our Lord will remain personally in heaven, until he comes in the clouds (as the disciples saw him ascend), with the holy angels; when the dead shall be raised, and he shall "judge the world in righteousness." That he will "so come in like manner" previous to the millennium, and *again* at the general judgment, we are not warranted in believing.

The conflicting opinions, however, that are entertained by many excellent men, regarding the meaning of those passages which speak of our Lord's coming and his kingdom, may perhaps be reconciled by a reference to the history of the Old Testament Church. For we must not forget that that Church was a type, in its history as well as in its rites, of the Gospel dispensation. The oppression of the Hebrews by Pharaoh is significant of the sufferings which God's people have ever endured from the Adversary; and the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea may be accepted as a type of the destruction of the Antichristian powers, and the casting of Satan into the abyss.

On the deliverance of the Israelites from the land of Egypt, we find JEHOVAH so spoken of, and so manifesting himself by miraculous power and awful signs—so constantly present, "bearing them on eagle's wings," supplying their immediate wants and providing for their future welfare by the noblest and wisest laws, and enforcing their observance by the most encouraging promises and the most solemn threatenings—that we at once adopt the language of the

prophet, and exclaim, "The Lord was their judge, the Lord was their lawgiver, the Lord was their king, he alone saved them." Indeed the personal reign of Jehovah over the Israelites is indicated in a more pointed manner and in plainer terms, than is the personal reign of Christ during the millennium. The Lord said, "I am *come down* to deliver my people." (Exod. iii. 8.) "God led the people about through the way of the wilderness." (Exod. xiii.) "The Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, through the pillar of fire and of the cloud." (Exod. xiv. 24.) "The Lord went before you," says Moses, "to search you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night to shew you by what way ye should go, and in a cloud by day." (Deut. i. 33.) And, said the Lord himself, "I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be their God:" and again, (Deut. xxiii. 14.) "The Lord thy God *walketh* in the midst of thy camp, therefore shall thy camp be holy." Frequently "the glory of the Lord appeared unto *all* the people;" He dwelt in an especial manner "between the cherubims," and "his voice was heard speaking from off the mercy-seat, that was upon the ark of testimony."—(Numbers vii. 89.)

But notwithstanding these tokens of Jehovah's presence with his people in the wilderness, and the still more wonderful manifestation of his glory when he descended like devouring fire on the top of the mount, and "talked with them face to face," (Deut. v. 4.)—yet the Israelites are reminded that they saw no manner of similitude on the day the Lord spake with them in Horeb—that no man could see his face and live—and that his presence among them was not personal nor palpable. It was visible only when shrouded in the fire-like glory and surrounded with clouds and darkness.

In a similar manner perhaps,—not personal, nor yet purely spiritual, but by symbols and tokens and exhibitions of his glory,—may Jesus manifest his presence in the Church and in the world, during the Millennium, and thus reign upon the earth with his saints; as

Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, reigned in the wilderness with his chosen people.*

The same peculiar character is also given to the subjects of this glorious King, under both dispensations. Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests and an holy nation," or a nation of saints; and in the Apocalypse, the "saints" or holy people, live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

Christ reigns now only over the few who keep his commandments;—and Satan is still "the Prince of this world," reigning in the hearts of the children of disobedience. *His* kingdom is manifested in the misery of his subjects, in the deceit and violence that fill the earth—yet his reign is not personal, though the signs of his presence are unmistakeable. So will the reign of Christ be manifested in the millennial period. His holy laws shall govern all nations, and the tokens of his presence be the blessings they shall enjoy.

"He shall come down like showers
Upon the fruitful earth;
And joy and hope, like flowers,
Spring in his path to birth:
Before him, on the mountains,
Shall peace, the herald, go;
And righteousness, in fountains,
From hill to valley flow."

The curse which was pronounced upon the earth, because of the sin of Adam, will then, to a great extent, be removed. Its natural barrenness will be changed into abundance. The waste places

* The government of the Israelites was a pure theocracy, especially during the time of the Judges. And when the people desired a king, the Lord said to Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." (1 Sam. viii. 7.) Even the Kings were only Jehovah's vicegerents; and, according as they observed or neglected the laws of their heavenly Sovereign, was the nation exalted or brought low.

shall become fruitful, and "the desert blossom as the rose." In the day when righteousness and peace shall dwell upon the earth, and the inhabitants thereof be "a royal priesthood and an holy nation," God will bless the earth for man's sake, as he formerly cursed it for his transgression. And the world at large shall enjoy the blessing which was promised to the faith and obedience of the Israelites.—"The land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell in safety,"—and "in the sixth year it shall bring forth fruit for three years."—(Lev. xxv. 19, 21.)

The removal of the curse may indeed imply a permanent and perpetual three-fold increase of the earth's present fertility, so that it shall be every where as the garden of Eden. Perhaps also the noisome weed will be changed into nutritious herbage; for the thorns and thistles are part of the curse. An abundant supply of vegetable food, for all classes of animals, will thus be provided. This seems almost a necessary preliminary to the change which will then take place in the nature and habits of the brute creation. One will no longer prey upon another. For it is predicted, that "the wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the cow and the bear shall feed, and the lion shall eat straw like an ox, and dust shall be the serpent's meat; they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." (Is. xi. 6; lxv. 25.) The vegetable and animal world *have suffered* for the sin of man, as St. Paul declares, they were made subject to vanity, and "every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now,"—but "the creature," he adds, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

The lower orders of existence, having been made partakers of the consequences of the fall of man—who was appointed to have dominion over them—shall also become partakers of the blessings attendant on his restoration. The happiness of Paradise shall be restored with its holiness; and the Almighty Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, again look forth upon a renovated world, and pronounce it to be "very good."—(Gen. i. 31.)

But we have no ground for believing, that during the Millen-

nium, all men will be holy. The earth indeed "shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea;" but faith, as well as knowledge, may exist without charity, that bond of perfectness—the love of God in the heart. The great tempter and deceiver of the nations will then be restrained, so that no erroneous system of worship shall be set up, nor false doctrines be propagated, nor vain philosophy spread throughout the world; but the evil heart of unbelief may still remain, and the individual man be "tempted and drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." This is clearly implied in the predicted success of Satan when he is loosed out of his prison at the expiration of the thousand years; for he shall deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. The existence of *iniquity* during the millennial blessedness is indeed directly affirmed by the prophet Isaiah; for when he is describing the felicity of the earth's inhabitants, he tells us, that "the *sinner*, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." (lxv. 20.)

We must likewise remember, that on the commencement of the reign of the saints, though the Antichristian nations that are under the influence of Popery and Infidelity, and are banded together as the fourth great Beast, shall go into perdition, or, as Daniel represents it, "his body shall be destroyed and given to the burning flames," yet he adds, "as concerning the rest of the beasts," the other great monarchies of the earth, "they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time." These, as we learn from the prophecies of Daniel, signify the great empires of Babylon, Persia, and Greece, which preceded the Roman, and are represented at the present day by the Persians, the Greeks, and the Turks; besides other less known and more distant nations, beyond the pale of Christendom; who, though they will be deprived of all authority and power as kingdoms, yet may retain for a time a national existence, with some of their peculiar customs and dogmas, and forms of worship.

But these will gradually disappear, and *all* the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; "and

the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High." For the very heathen in that day shall know the Lord, and cast their idols unto the moles and the bats; and the Lord alone shall be exalted.

Then will be accomplished that glorious vision described by St. John in the 14th chapter: "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." The messengers of salvation will then run to and fro, and the knowledge of the Lord be increased;—open doors will be set before them, which neither man nor devil can shut, and the word of their testimony will be every where accompanied by the demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high.—Then shall our Saviour see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied, when the nations bow beneath his sceptre of righteousness, and "the uttermost parts of the earth become his possession." "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, his name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto his name, and a pure offering." —(Mal. i. 2.)

And in this *Church universal* there will be no division; it will exhibit a union and harmony, such as our Saviour prayed for, and the Apostle exhorted believers to strive after. The BIBLE will then be better understood, and its holy doctrines and precepts more simply followed; and men will look back with wonderment on the sects and parties, and vain ceremonies, and frivolous distinctions of the present day, and marvel how Satan could have so bewitched them.

"In thy family, O Jesus,
Love should more and more abound;
This thy Word and Spirit teach us,
As its mark to all around."

This *oneness* and loving spirit of the Church is not only set forth in the Apocalypse, under the symbolical figure of the Bride, the Lamb's wife, arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; but also in

the prophecies of the Old Testament, its literal unity and fellowship in the body, as well as in the spirit, is clearly intimated—for Isaiah referring to the glory of the latter day, and the honour then to be conferred upon the Jews, and on the holy mountain, Jerusalem, says, “Thy gates shall be open continually, that men may bring unto thee the wealth of the Gentiles,” and “It shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall *all flesh* come to worship before me, saith the Lord.” (lxvi. 23.) Just as the tribes of Israel assembled at the tabernacle to keep their solemn festivals—and we may remember, that the Jews and their temple service, are exhibited throughout the Apocalypse as typical of the Christian Church. But still more remarkable is the language of Zechariah: “It shall come to pass, (he says,) that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.”—(xiv. 16, 17.)

These are predictions, which, fifty years ago, we should have said, were not to be literally understood, because it was impossible they could be fulfilled. But God hath given man wisdom, and skill and energy, to overcome the seeming impossibility. By means of steam and railways all nations are becoming near neighbours—and now, when we *know* that we can travel at the rate of sixty miles an hour, we surely may *believe*, that in the latter day, God in his wonderful Providence, may by his Spirit so direct the heart and ways of man, that the Church, through all her bounds, shall, year by year, go up to the literal Jerusalem, and there hold their solemn assemblies before the King, the Lord of Hosts, and enjoy fellowship and communion with the venerable bands of Patriarchs, the glorious company of Apostles, the noble army of Martyrs, and all the blessed and holy, who have had part in the first resurrection.

But if the literal Jerusalem be indicated in Scripture as the

metropolis or gathering place of Christians during the Millennium, much more clearly is it foretold that it will again become the capital of the Jews. For the return of God's ancient people to their own land, forms a prominent feature in all the Old Testament predictions of the latter day glory. Nor can those predictions fail of a *literal* fulfilment; for the *punishment* the Jews have endured because of their disobedience and rebellion, has been fearfully literal for 1800 years; and their restoration and *blessings* are foretold in precisely the same manner, when they repent and turn to the Lord. In the 26th chapter of Leviticus, and in the 28th of Deuteronomy, the blessing and the curse are set before them, and the plagues there denounced are indeed wonderful; and so is the history of the sufferings of the Jews. The blessings promised are no less extraordinary; but these the Jews have not yet enjoyed, except in a very partial and temporary manner. But the promises of God never fail, though their accomplishment may be delayed. He promised to Abraham "to give unto his seed the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession." "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; and I will be their God." —(Gen. xvii. 7, 8.)

This covenant the Lord will never forget; and therefore he tells them, by the mouth of Moses, that when they shall be scattered among the heathen, and pining away because of their iniquities, and their land lying desolate (as the Holy Land, the land of Israel, is at the present day); that then, "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they have trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies: if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land."—(Lev. xxvi. 40—42.)

How and when the repentance and the restoration of the Jews shall be effected, we know not. At present there is little sign of their *repentance*, though that is declared to be the condition of their restoration. But nothing is too hard for the Lord ; and the wonderful manner in which he will effect his purposes towards them, is set before us in Ezekiel's vision of the resurrection of the dry bones, (ch. xxxvii. 12.) "O my people, saith the Lord, I will open your graves—and put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land." "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean : from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you : and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers ; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses : and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord God, be it known unto you : be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God ; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden ; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I

the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it."—(Ezek. xxxvi. 24—36.)

These and similar predictions were uttered by prophets who lived before the 70 years' captivity, and it may be said, they were fulfilled on the return of the Jews from Babylon. But every unbiassed reader must acknowledge that a wider dispersion and greater sufferings, as well as more extensive and permanent blessings are here predicted, than the Jews experienced at that period of their history. It surely was not by the Babylonish Captivity that "the house of Israel was sifted *among all nations*, like as corn is sifted in a sieve"—nor was the promise made good in all its fulness, when they were brought back again:—"I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." (Amos ix. 9, 15.) These prophecies were then only partially accomplished; for we know that the Romans "pulled them up," and cast them out of their land, 1800 years ago—and as a nation they have never since returned. But even if these predictions had been fulfilled on the return from Babylon, are we to limit their application to one captivity, and to one restoration? What authority have we in the Bible for such a restriction? Rather are we encouraged to believe, as there has been a second and more extensive dispersion, that there will be a second and more blessed restoration. The fact of the preservation of the Jews as a *peculiar and distinct people*, in the midst of all the nations among whom they dwell, is a proof that God still watches over them, and that the promise He made in the wilderness is not forgotten;—"In the land of their enemies I will not cast them away, neither will I destroy them utterly—but I will remember the covenant of their ancestors." (Levit. xxvi. 44, 45, comp. Rom. xi.)

Neither can we believe that all the blessings promised to Israel in the latter days, are intended for the spiritual seed of Abraham, the Church of Christ. For the same apostle who declares that "there is no difference (in the way of salvation) between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon

Him," (Rom. x. 12)—shews in the next chapter, that the Jews will again be distinguished as God's peculiar people—"What shall the receiving of them be (he says) but life from the dead?"—Referring apparently to Ezekiel's vision of the resurrection of the dry bones.

It was against the *literal* Egypt and Babylon, Edom and Tyre and Moab, that Ezekiel prophesied,—and the tokens of God's judgments upon those countries remain even to this day—so likewise, it was certainly of the *literal* Israel that the same prophet uttered predictions which are yet unfulfilled. "They shall no more be a prey to the heathen," said he (ch. xxxiv. 28, 29), "neither bear the shame of the heathen any more." "And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." (ch. xxxvii. 28.) If these predictions refer not to the literal Israel, we may be permitted to ask, Who are meant by the heathen?

But as the Jews have been for centuries "sown among the people," (as was foretold by Zechariah, who lived after the return from Babylon) so may we conclude that the Lord "will hiss for them and gather them;"—"and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again—and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and place shall not be found for them.—And I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord." (Zech. x. 9—12.)

And, adds the Apostle Paul, "So all Israel shall be saved;" though "blindness in part hath happened unto them, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," (Rom. xi. 25, 26); and then "there shall come out of Zion the deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."

"When shall that hour of grace appear,
That rends their vail as Christ draws near;

When shall they feel what Thomas felt,
When 'fore his wounded side he knelt?
Then, Father, all thy family,
Shall in thy house assembled be,
Then Jew and Greek one prayer shall raise,
One God with grateful rapture praise."

LECTURE XXII.

MILLENNIAL BLESSEDNESS.—THE “LIVING WATERS.”—PRIVILEGES OF THE JEWS.—LONGEVITY OF MAN.—SATAN LOOSED FROM HIS PRISON.—DECEIVES THE NATIONS.—GOG AND MAGOG—UTTERLY DESTROYED.—THE DEVIL CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE.—SECOND COMING OF CHRIST AND THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.—REVELATION XX. 7—15.

In the preceding Lecture, I endeavoured to shew from Scripture, that after the overthrow of the Antichristian powers, the Old Testament worthies and New Testament saints will be raised from the dead, and reign with Christ on the earth for a thousand years. Then “they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” I also attempted to prove, that the reign of Christ will not be personal and visible, nor yet purely spiritual; but similar to that of Jehovah over the Israelites in the wilderness, by signs and tokens, by the pillar of fire and cloud, and the symbol of his glory in the holy place of the tabernacle:—that the earth itself will be increased in fertility and beauty by the partial removal of the curse; and the lower orders of creation participate in the blessings attendant on the prevalence of righteousness and peace throughout the world:—that though all men will not every where be holy, yet all will be subject to the influence of the Gospel. It was also shewn from Scripture, that the Jews will, at the same time, with renewed hearts, be restored unto their long-desolate land, according to the promises made to their fathers; and that the Holy Land will then become like the garden of Eden; for the Lord will “call for the corn, and multiply the fruit of the tree, and all the increase of the field.”

And not their land only, but their *water* also, we are led to believe, shall experience a similar blessing. For it is difficult to understand otherwise than *literally* what is predicted in Ezekiel concerning the healing of the waters of the Dead Sea;* unless we refer that part of his vision to a period subsequent to the general Judgment, and coincident with the new heavens and the new earth: but in this latter opinion, few, I believe, will be disposed to concur. It seems almost necessary, indeed, that the bitter waters should be made sweet, in order that harmony may exist even throughout the elements; and peculiar blessings be derived

* A great diversity of opinion exists among commentators regarding the meaning of this and other predictions in Ezekiel. They are generally viewed as figurative representations of the spiritual blessings attendant on the Gospel dispensation. Thus Dr. Kitto remarks on the 47th chapter:—"It is generally admitted, that the account of the waters issuing from the temple, deepening and widening as they went, blessing the land through which they passed, and healing the sea of death to which they came, must be figuratively understood. And, thus understood, most commentators seem inclined to apply the allegory to the spread and the blessings of the Christian faith. It is indeed impossible to understand the account literally: yet it is certain that this figurative description is founded upon circumstances proper to the place and country, and which are applied and sustained with great felicity in this very beautiful parable." But there is this great difficulty in the way of applying such visions and predictions to the Christian Church,—that we thus set aside the Israelites altogether, and make the promises of God, concerning their future blessedness in the Holy Land, of none effect. In the very chapter referred to, the prophet describes the boundaries of the land, as it shall be inherited, "according to the twelve tribes of Israel;" and says, it shall be divided among the tribes by lot "for an inheritance unto you, and to the strangers that sojourn among you." Now, if the waters be figurative, so ought also the land to be; and if the tribes of Israel denote the Christian Church, what are we to understand by the strangers that sojourn among them? There is no doubt of the literal fulfilment of Ezekiel's predictions against the nations bordering on Palestine—nor of the application to the Jews of the admoni-

from them during the millennium, in that distinguished land, when it is again inhabited by the chosen people of God. In the Dead Sea or Lake of Sodom, which rests in a deep chasm between the mountains of Moab and Judea, (1,300 feet below the Mediterranean,) it is well known, that no fish or other living creature exists in its bitter and sluggish waters; and its shores still seem to be suffering from the fierce anger of the Lord. But in the time to which we refer, the curse shall be removed from this mysterious lake. By the same divine power which enabled Elisha to heal the springs at Jericho, shall the waters of the Dead Sea be healed, and be made to teem with animal life: thus affording a new and ex-

tions and judgments and promises which are contained in the 33rd, 34th, and 36th chapters. The 37th chapter can refer only to the same people, and was expressly intended to revive their hope, and to comfort them during their dispersion among the heathen. The vision of the resurrection of the dry bones, can scarcely be considered as having any reference to the return from the Babylonish Captivity, for the Jews had been expressly told by Jeremiah, that after 70 years were accomplished, the Lord would visit them, and cause them to return; (Jer. xxv. 16, and xxix. 10.)—and therefore with no propriety could they say, “Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts.” But look at their condition during the last 1800 years—“without a friend, a hope, or home”—and can we doubt the application of the prophecy to the dispersed seed of Abraham? “Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.” (Ezek. xxxvii. 11, 12.)

The predicted invasion of the land of Israel by Gog and his host, must be applied in like manner. To interpret such prophecies spiritually, as figurative of events connected with the Christian Church, seems not to be in harmony with their obvious design of encouraging or threatening the particular nations to whom they are addressed. We perfectly accord with the maxim of Hooker, that “where a literal construction will stand, the furthest from the letter is generally the worst.” There are doubtless serious difficulties in the closing chapters of Ezekiel, whatever mode of interpretation may be adopted; but the progress of events and a more careful study of the Scriptures will ultimately, we believe, enable commentators to remove them.

haustless supply of food to the millions of restored Israelites. The river of living waters, (issuing "from under the threshold of the house,") by which this wonderful change shall be effected, will have its banks clothed with ever-verdant trees, whose fruit shall be for meat, and whose leaves shall be for medicine. For, as Ezekiel stood by the brink of the river, the Lord said unto him, "These waters issue out towards the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, [*i. e.* the Dead Sea] the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglam; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."—(Ezek. xlvii. 8—12.)

The same healing and living waters appear to be predicted by Zechariah, as flowing out from Jerusalem—half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea—in that day when the Lord shall smite all the nations that are gathered against Jerusalem; and he shall be King over all the earth:—for "in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one."—(Zech. xiv. 8, 9.)

In temporal blessings, and in many peculiar privileges, the Jews, as a nation—as God's covenant people—as the seed of Abraham his servant—will be highly distinguished in the latter day; but,

in the blessings of salvation, there will be no distinction between the Jew and the Greek; both are alike justified freely by grace—both alike sprinkled with the blood of atonement—for both alike “in that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.” When the restoration of Israel draws near, indeed—when the glory of the Lord begins to dawn upon them, the Gentile nations shall regard them with love and reverence, and hasten to their help; esteeming it an honour to assist in their restoration. “All they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense: . . . the isles shall wait for me; and the ships of Tarshish * first to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them,” (Isa. lx. 6, 8); “and the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee; the sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.” “And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory.”

Many writers, indeed, are of opinion, that these and similar prophecies, indicate the condition of the Christian Church during the millennial blessedness; and, to a certain extent, they are correct; for both Jews and Gentiles, as already stated, will form but one glorious and united Church. But the Jews are ever spoken of in such predictions as distinct from the Gentiles—as having a national or corporate existence, independent of their Christian brethren belonging to other races of mankind. But this will excite neither anger nor jealousy. In that day, “Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.” The feeling will be that inculcated by St. Paul, (Rom. xv. 27.)—“If the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things.”

And the Gentiles shall be fellow-heirs with them of many blessings they shall enjoy. For Jew and Gentile alike, the earth, lightened

* Tarshish is here supposed by many to signify England.

of its curse, shall gladden the heart by its fertility and beauty—both alike, endowed with more expanded intellectual powers, and higher perceptive faculties, shall be enabled more fully to understand and to magnify the works of God, and to render them subservient to the original purposes of their creation. Both shall be animated by the same Divine Spirit, and be guided by the same golden rule—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." Peace and righteousness will then indeed reign upon the earth; and the innocence and the happiness of Paradise be restored to all the sons of Adam. Nor will the enjoyment of this felicity be cut short, as in the present state of the world, by an early death, or a premature old age. For, among the other blessings of the millennial period, it is predicted that the days of man shall be lengthened, perhaps to the age of the patriarchs who lived before the flood, or extended as the age of trees,* which continue growing for upwards of a thousand years. This may take place gradually, as it is doing even now: for it is a well ascertained fact, that during the last hundred years, the average duration of man's life has nearly doubled. And, as a necessary accompaniment of such longevity, man shall then also be almost exempted from sickness and pain. "The righteous," saith David, "shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like the cedar in Lebanon: they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing," (Ps. xcii. 12, 14.) But Isaiah, speaking expressly of the latter day glory, says, "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man who hath not filled his days; for the *child* shall die an hundred years old; but the *sinner* being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat. For as the *days of a tree* are the days of my people; and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor

* A cedar lately discovered in California, 285 feet high, and 92 in circumference near the ground, is calculated to be above 2,500 years old.

bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them.”—(Isa. lxx. 20—23.)

So that it seems reasonable to believe, that many of the servants of God, the inhabitants of the world at that time, will live through the whole period of the thousand years during which the risen saints shall reign upon the earth: that is, if we understand the Millennium as meaning merely a thousand years. On this point, however, a diversity of opinion exists among the divines of the present day—some believing it signifies a long though indefinite period. There is, however, a wonderful accordance on this subject between the Jewish Rabbins and the early Christian writers. The Rabbins say, “As every seventh year is the year of remission, so, out of the seven thousand years of the world, the seventh millenary shall be the millenary of remission, that God alone may be exalted in that day.” And Lactantius, one of the Christian Fathers, believed, that “because all the works of God were finished in six days, it is necessary that the world should remain in this state six thousand years; but at the end of the six thousandth year, all wickedness shall be abolished out of the earth, and justice shall reign for a thousand years.”

When shall this reign of righteousness commence?—Some have supposed that it began when Christ first appeared on the earth, others that it commenced with the reign of Constantine; but these and various other opinions of a past or present Millennium, are unworthy of notice. The earth has never yet fulfilled the conditions required in the millennial blessedness—it has not yet begun, though certainly near at hand.

The venerable Faber, in his “Sacred Calendar of Prophecy,” fixes its commencement in the year 1865—that is, within twelve years from the present time (1853)—and many reasons may be adduced to shew, that we may look for the signs of its approach about that period. But whether it be so near or not, we may rest assured that it is rapidly approaching.

“God’s purposes are ripening fast,
Unfolding every hour.”

It is possible, that some here present may be witnesses and partakers of the happiness which will attend the reign of the saints upon the earth; and of such it may be said, as our Lord said of those who heard his gracious words, and saw the mighty works he performed in the days of his flesh, "Blessed are ye, for many kings and righteous men desired to see those things which ye see, and to hear those things which ye hear," but were not permitted. And blessed indeed they will be, if among "the called and faithful and chosen." The possession of outward privileges, however, will avail nothing even in the Millennium, without faith which worketh by love. The declaration of Jesus concerning the most honourable position in the Church, will be true then, even as it is now: "Rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

Blessed, then, will he be, "who watcheth and keepeth his garments;" who walks circumspectly, lest he fall into temptation. For, as we have shewn from Scripture, all men will not then be holy—there will be sinners living then, even amidst the full blaze of the latter day glory. And, towards the close of the Millennium, there will be multitudes prepared to listen to the delusions of the Devil, just as in the present day. For St. John tells us, "When the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." (Rev. xx. 7—10.)

After what has been stated regarding the blessedness of the thousand years' reign of the risen saints and martyrs, of the symbols of Jesus' presence on the earth, and of the extraordinary phenomena which will then be manifested, it seems wonderful that men should be found so foolish or so hardened, as to turn

away from the Lord, openly revolting against his authority, and banding together under the standard of the great Enemy, in a desperate attempt to destroy the Saints and the beloved City. But the history of mankind furnishes us with examples equally singular of the successful temptations of Satan, and the weakness of the human mind to resist his influence.

Our first parents fell before him in Paradise, notwithstanding the Lord God condescended to manifest his "presence amongst the trees of the garden." And the Israelites repeatedly rebelled against Jehovah, and "provoked the Most High in the wilderness," though the awful voice from Mount Sinai was thundering in their ears, and the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day, perpetually reminded them of the presence of the Lord. But they soon became accustomed to these Divine manifestations, "and forgot God their Saviour, which had done great things in Egypt, and wondrous works in the land of Ham." They murmured against Him, even while he "satisfied them with the bread of heaven," and gave them water from the flinty rock. If, then, amidst all *these* wonderful exhibitions of Jehovah's presence and power, his chosen people sinned, and provoked him, so that many thousands were slain for their iniquity, we may readily believe, that when the restraint is taken off Satan, when he is unloosed from the prison of the abyss, he will find no difficulty in deceiving "the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth—Gog and Magog."

It has been a question with many, whether these nations are the same as the Gog and Magog mentioned in the prophecies of Ezekiel. I believe them to be distinct. Here they are said to be gathered from the *four quarters* of the earth; but Ezekiel describes them as coming from the *north* parts. In the Revelation, they are said to be devoured by fire from heaven; but in Ezekiel, the Lord says, "I will call for a sword against him: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood." In this chapter, the destruction of Gog and Magog seems to be immediately followed by the general judgment; but in Ezekiel their overthrow is followed by the diffusion of the

knowledge of the Lord among the heathen, and the glorification of his name in the eyes of many nations; and especially by the exaltation and sanctification of the house of Israel. Though both invasions are prophetic, and neither are fulfilled, yet the one in the Old Testament appears to be typical of that in the New; not only in the identity of the name, but in the similarity of their object:—in the Apocalypse it is to destroy the saints and the beloved city—in Ezekiel it is to spoil the people of Israel, that have been gathered out of many nations, and are now dwelling safely.

It is the opinion of some learned commentators, that by the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel we are to understand, the Scythian nations, or more strictly the RUSSIANS: and this opinion seems justified by the translation they have given of the passage: (chap. xxxviii. 2.) "Son of man, set thy face against Gog of the land of Magog, prince of Rosh (or Rhos), Meshech and Tubal." The people referred to as Rhos, are supposed to be the same as the *Russi*, from whom the modern Russians derive their name; and Meshech and Tubal are interpreted as signifying Moscow and Tobolsk, the well-known original provinces of the Russian empire.

Their invasion of the Holy Land, appears to be predicted as taking place soon after the restoration of the Jews, in the beginning of the Millennium; for Tarshish, and Sheba, and Dedan, who are described in Isaiah as foremost in bringing back the Jews to their own land, are, in Ezekiel, represented as coming to their assistance, and defying Gog and the mighty host of many nations marshalled under his banner.—(Ezek. xxxviii.; Isa. lx.)

The prophecy in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel, deserves particular attention in the present day, if we believe it has any reference to the power and ultimate fate of Russia;* especially as *England* is

* Whether peace be concluded with Russia now (1856) or some years hence, it seems impossible that she will ever be able again to prosecute her schemes against Turkey, by sending an armament down the Black Sea, or marching her troops along its western shores. But if Russia be left in possession of her present Asiatic frontier, (as in all probability she will), and thus retain her Transcaucasian provinces, and with them all the passes

supposed by most commentators to be prefigured by the prophet, under the designation of the "Merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof."

The destruction, however, of Gog and Magog—those enemies of Israel and of the saints, is represented, both by Ezekiel and St. John, as complete and irretrievable. Their number in the Apocalypse is described "as the sand of the sea;" and "they go up on the breadth of the earth," intimating that, like their predecessors in Ezekiel, they will be of various nations, having one head, and one object—though coming from different quarters, and in vastly superior numbers. Their crime also will be greater, as sinning against more light and knowledge, and in the face of more striking manifestations of the Divine presence.

The apostasy seems to be almost universal, and Satan appears

into Asia Minor, she will be able, whenever she wishes, to go to war with Turkey, to despatch her armies through the countries lying on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, and overrun great part of the Turkish empire, almost before her intentions are known in Europe. She will probably wait patiently for a more favourable opportunity than the present to effect her long cherished design of seizing on Turkey and the Holy Land, and "if possible," (according to Peter the Great's Will) "re-establishing the ancient commercial intercourse with the Levant through Syria." Her fanaticism, equally with her ambition, pants for the possession of Jerusalem as the head-quarters of the Greek religion. It is worthy of notice, that some of the nations mentioned in Ezekiel, as accompanying Gog on his expedition "against the mountains of Israel," can be identified as inhabiting the countries adjoining the Russian provinces in Asia; and all of them are described as coming from "the north parts," that is, north of Judea. But great changes in the meantime, as intimated in the prophetic writings, will have taken place among the States of Europe; and none of them are alluded to, as opposing the progress of the invader, except Tarshish. The overthrow of Gog (or Russia) is, however, represented as complete, though there be no Western alliance.

[The above note was written in January, 1856; the news of the proclamation of peace reached Ceylon in the month of May, as this sheet was preparing for press.—W. S.]

to have gained more than his former ascendancy over the nations of the world. A falling away so general, will be an awful fulfilment of our Saviour's solemn intimation, "When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" His very coming will be disbelieved and derided. St. Peter tells us, the scoffers in the last days, walking after their own lust, shall say, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation?" But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night—just as the flood came upon an ungodly world in the days of Noah, and "as it was in the days of Lot—they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed," (Luke xvii. 28—30) "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."—(2 Thess. i. 8.)

These, and similar predictions of our Saviour's second coming, harmonize with the statement in the Apocalypse: "fire came down from God out of heaven" and devoured his enemies. This fiery stream will in an instant overwhelm the immense antichristian army of Gog and Magog, probably when on the very eve of accomplishing, as they imagine, the entire destruction of the Church of God.

But as Lot was delivered in the overthrow of Sodom, so will the "camp of the saints" be preserved in the midst of the consumption of its enemies—for "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."—(2 Pet. ii. 9.) And Paul tells the Thessalonians, that when "the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, the dead in Christ shall rise first—then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the air."

But *when* these things shall take place there is no intimation given us in the Holy Scriptures. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels which are in heaven." St. Paul declared

that a falling away from the faith must *first* take place; and to St. John it was revealed, that the apostasy should be succeeded by the reign of the saints for a thousand years. But how long it shall be from the termination of the Millennium, until Satan re-establishes his reign over the nations, and excites them to a general rebellion against God, we are not informed. We only know that his reign will come to a sudden end—his deluded followers be consumed as in an instant—and he himself, the great Deceiver, “cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented, day and night for ever and ever.” Then will be completely fulfilled the first promise of deliverance from the consequences of the Fall—“the Seed of the woman shall bruise the Serpent’s head.” Then will the war with the Lamb be terminated by the final overthrow of the great Dragon,—and all the wonderful and mysterious purposes of Jehovah, in the creation and redemption of man, be gloriously consummated.

Some have objected that the lake of fire cannot be real or material, because spirits are in their nature impassible to fire, and cannot suffer from it. But we may surely reply to such objectors in the words of our Lord, “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures neither the power of God.” In the interpretation of the parable of the tares, Jesus says, “they shall gather out of his kingdom all them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire:”—that “everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” The Old Testament contains references to the lake of fire as well as the New;—and of such passages it may be said, if we set aside the *literal* meaning, what can be the meaning of the *figurative*? Fire seems nearly allied to spirit;* and though we know not whether spirits can be affected by material fire, yet we know that when the three children were cast into Nebuchadnezzar’s furnace, the nature of *fire* was changed, that it had no power over their bodies; and the Almighty Creator can likewise change the nature of *spirit*, and render it subject to the pain and torment of unquenchable fire.

* See Heb. i. 7; Ps. civ. 4; Dan. vii. 9; Ezek. i. 4—20; Gen. iii. 24.

After Satan is cast into the burning lake, John says, "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."—(Rev. xx. 11—15.)

He that sat upon the throne is our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,—as St. Paul declared to the Athenians, "God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead."—(Acts xvii. 31.) But this *man*, the great Judge of all, is Immanuel, God with us—God as well as man—and is described by Daniel, as the "Ancient of days, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire; a fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him, the judgment was set, and the books were opened."—(Dan. vii. 9, 10.) In similar sublime and solemn language our Lord speaks of the final judgment, "when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, and sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations."

From before the face of the Judge it is said, "the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them." These strong expressions refer to the important changes which will take place in the earth and sky *after the judgment* has terminated. St. Peter also refers to them in his second Epistle, as similar to the

effects produced by the Deluge—"whereby the world that then was, *perished*." Doubtless great changes will be made on the surface of the earth; but more important changes will take place in the nature and condition of its inhabitants.

All the world shall be summoned before the "great white throne"—"the dead, small and great, shall stand before God"—all the generations of mankind, from our first father Adam, down to his latest descendant! The imagination attempts in vain to form an adequate conception of the scene. The sea gives up its dead—death and hell deliver up the dead which were in them—*all*, startled from their resting-places and restored to life at the sound of the archangel's trumpet: "for all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."—(John v. 28.)

And then, says St. John, "The books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." In the last great day, man will be judged justly—in righteousness—for the Judge of all the earth will do right. There will be no arbitrary punishment, nor capricious reward. The doctrine of predestination will not determine the condition of either the righteous or the wicked. The *books* will be produced; and, according to the things written in the books, all will be judged. The inspired Volume, the Law of God, the only standard of right and wrong, will be opened; the account of each man's actions will be produced. Those who have sinned under the law, shall be condemned by the law; and those who have sinned without law, shall be judged without law, but according to the light which God has given them. He that hath given a cup of cold water only to one of the little ones in the name of a disciple, shall not lose his reward. Acts of compassion to the poor, have the promise of recompense at the resurrection of the just. If such ministrations be found in the book to have proceeded from a principle of love to God, then will the Judge acknowledge them as done unto himself,

"Inasmuch, as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

"Another book was opened, which was the book of life." It is called in the 3rd chapter, the "book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." This book is frequently referred to by the inspired writers. Moses, praying for the forgiveness of the Israelites, says, "If *not*, blot me, I pray thee, out of the *book* which thou hast written;" and the Lord said, "whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book;" and Daniel is informed that his "people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." In this book, as in a census or register, the names of all those are written who by faith are made heirs of everlasting life—such were our Lord's disciples, to whom he said, "Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven;" such were St. Paul's fellow-labourers, "whose names," he says, "are in the book of life;" such indeed are all those "who fear the Lord and think upon his name." For them "the book of remembrance is written before him;" "and they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day, when I make up my jewels."—(Mal. iii. 17.)

Under the similitude of books and registers, in which are inscribed the names and the actions of each individual of the human race, is set before us the clear light in which the secret heart of man will be manifested—and the boundless knowledge of the Almighty and Omniscient Judge; his intimate acquaintance with every thought, word and deed, and the impartial nature of his proceedings, as well as the justice of the sentence which he will pronounce. Those who have followed him here, and whose works of faith and labours of love have been recorded in the *book*, he will confess before his Father and the holy angels, and reward them with an inheritance in the kingdom, "prepared for them from the foundation of the world,"—while the wicked, the selfish, the unbelieving, those who have lived only to themselves and for themselves, whose names are *not* found written in the book of life, shall be "cast into the lake of fire," "prepared for the devil and his angels:" where shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth—where the worm

dieth not, and where the fire is not quenched. "This is the second death." And it is added, "Death and Hell were cast into the lake of fire; that is, death and the grave, or the invisible place of separate spirits, shall also, at the close of the final judgment, be banished from the earth, and shall dwell in the place of torment, with the wretched prisoners of despair. This will be the last act of the Judge—the crowning triumph of the Redeemer; as it is written, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." —(Hos. xiii. 14.)

Jesus must reign as King, until every foe be overcome; and, when the last enemy is destroyed, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory."

But a solemn question arises:—Shall we be partakers of the victory? shall we be among the number of the saints by whom the King shall be glorified and admired, when he comes "with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel?" There will be no *idle* spectators of that triumph! Each individual will have an interest in the proceedings, lasting as eternity; involving everlasting bliss, or endless misery. What is our condition now? Are we living by faith on the Son of God; and, as the sons of God, looking forward to our heavenly inheritance, and giving all diligence to make our calling and election sure? or are we cold, careless, unconcerned; loving the darkness rather than the light; listening to the temptations of Satan; and grieving the Spirit of God? If this be our condition, let us pray to be awakened to a perception of our danger,—to feel deeply conscious of the prevailing love of earthly objects, and of our indifference to things heavenly;—and then, humbled by a sense of weakness and unworthiness, surely every heart will be ready to exclaim:

"Lord, it is my chief complaint,
That my love is weak and faint;
Yet I love thee and adore:
O for grace to love thee more!"

The world is passing away, with all its pride and pleasures; and

only he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. And this is the will of God, "that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another." If we abide in his love, "then shall we have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at *his coming*;" for "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him;" and "herein," says St. John, "is our love made perfect, that we *may have boldness in the day of judgment*."

But fainter than the pole-star's ray,
Before the noon-tide blaze of day;
And lighter than the viewless sand
Beneath the wave that sweeps the strand,
Is all of love that man can know,
All that in angel breasts can glow,
Compared, O Lord of Hosts, with *thine*,
Eternal, fathomless, divine;
That love, whose praise, with quenchless fire
Inflames the blest seraphic choir,
Where perfect rapture reigns above,
And love is all, for Thou art Love.

LECTURE XXIII.

NO MORE SEA.—NEW HEAVEN AND NEW EARTH.—THE NEW JERUSALEM.—BLESSEDNESS OF THE RIGHTEOUS.—THE TIME IS AT HAND.—CONCLUSION.—REVELATION XXL; XXII.

“AND I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be their God*. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city,

the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, *and* had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are *the names* of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth four-square, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred *and* forty *and* four cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate *was* of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb *is* the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

"And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever. And he said unto me, These sayings *are* faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."—(Rev. xxi., xxii. 1—6.)

After the judgment of the quick and the dead, as described in the foregoing chapter—when the earth and the heaven fled away from the face of him that sat upon the throne—St. John "saw a new heaven and a new earth;" but "there was no more sea." This expression has been understood by some *figuratively*, as if in the renewed world there should be no *troubles* or *commotions*: and doubtless there will then be none. But no figure seems necessary to point out what is so plainly implied in the very character and condition of the inhabitants of that blessed state—for nothing shall enter into it that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie—the sources of trouble and commotion shall be cut off; and "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain."

The disappearance of the *sea*, we may therefore understand *literally*—even as the stability of the earth and the heaven must be so understood. And we may in some measure comprehend, how such an extraordinary change on the earth's surface can be effected, by remembering what occurred at the Deluge, "whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." It is evident, that extraordinary changes then took place in the physical configuration of the earth's surface: and that all the waters of the

Deluge did not return within their original boundaries, may be very safely inferred. But this superabundance of waters, the accumulations of which are called *seas*, (or as some think, the Mediterranean Sea alone,) will be dried up or absorbed by the *fiery* deluge, which, at the general judgment, will overspread the world; for the same heavens and earth, which perished by water, says Peter, "are now by the word of God kept in store, *reserved* unto fire against the day of judgment"—in the which, "the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up."

But this burning does not imply an utter destruction or annihilation of the fabric of this world. St. Peter himself only compares it with the effects produced by the flood; and he adds, "we look for new heavens and a new earth, according to his promise, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This *promise*, we find in the prophecies of Isaiah (lxv. 17,) as well as in the Book of Revelation. The *new* heavens and *new* earth, signifying the *changing* or *renewing* the *face* of the earth only, of which we have a faint but significant image in the change which we witness year by year, from the snow-clad sterility of winter to the verdant beauty of spring and genial warmth of summer. The same idea is conveyed by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where, quoting both from Isaiah and the 102nd Psalm, he says, The heavens and earth "shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed." (Heb. i. 11, 12.) In the same spirit, *of changing and renewing*, not of destruction, must we understand the declaration of our Lord, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

The *heaven* here spoken of, can only have reference to the atmosphere which surrounds the earth, the region of the clouds, which is frequently called the "*heavens*." The Jews commonly spoke of *three* heavens, as divided into three distinct regions—first, the lower firmament of the air; second, the starry skies; and the third

heaven, where was the dwelling-place of the Almighty. So we find St. Paul saying, he was caught up to the *third heaven*, where he heard things unlawful to utter.

The heavens and the earth thus purified by fire, are prepared for the everlasting dwelling-place of the righteous. *This earth*, on which we now live, will become, in beauty and felicity, equal to the abode of the angels. There will then be no more curse. Perpetual spring shall blossom throughout the world. The Tree of Life shall yield its fruit every month—and righteousness and peace shall fill the air with their heavenly odour.

To this new heaven and new earth St. John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, “coming down from God out of heaven.” We may understand the New Jerusalem, here spoken of, either as the city itself (the figurative city of which St. Paul speaks), which after the judgment shall be established upon the renewed and holy earth, or as the *inhabitants* of that city—that is, the saints, the ransomed from the earth, the whole church universal, the great multitude that no man can number, whom St. John had already seen before the throne of God.

In the Old Testament, we find the Prophets frequently using the term *Jerusalem*, to signify not only the material city itself, but also the people who dwell in it; and sometimes it is employed as a figure to represent the whole Jewish state and polity, the nation and country at large.

In this extended sense, we may view the New Jerusalem as “the City of the living God,” or “the general assembly and Church of the first-born.”

But some have supposed, that the description given in this chapter of the new heavens and new earth, and the blessedness of those who dwell upon it, synchronizes with the *Millennium* of the previous chapter, and that this is only a more detailed account of that period. In refutation of such a notion, it may be sufficient to notice, that Gog and Magog, the nations dwelling in the four corners of the earth, who shall be deceived by Satan, on the expiration of the Millennium, cannot be inhabitants of the new heavens and new earth,

into which the unbeliever, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, shall never find an entrance. Such a notion is also inconsistent with the recorded order of events—and “It is not our business,” as Bishop Newton observes, “to frame theories, or invent hypotheses, but faithfully to follow the Word of God as our surest guide, without regarding much the authority of men.”

Now the word of God points out to us, that the Millennium will be followed by an Apostasy, and then cometh the general judgment, and the purifying of the earth by fire—that all the saints, both of the first and the general resurrection, united to their raised and glorified bodies, shall then ascend with the Judge into heaven, and there be presented by the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls before the throne of God, as a glorious Church, “holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight.” (Col. i. 22.) On this presentation of the saints, as “the reward of the travail of his soul,” the Mediator’s kingdom will be ended: his office as Redeemer will terminate:—as St. Paul states, (1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.) “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: and when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” But, as the Lamb of God who suffered and died to redeem a fallen world, he will ever remain highly exalted far above all principality and power, and every name that is named: as partaker of our nature, as God and man, he will shine with the Father in the midst of the throne, enlightening the universe with the brightness of his glory, and receiving the adorations of saints and angels, through the countless ages of eternity.

And this earth itself, which witnessed his sorrows, and was the scene of the stupendous work of man’s redemption, shall also be highly honoured, by becoming the theatre of Christ’s glorious triumph. For now the whole heavenly train is seen by St. John descending to this lower world. He beholds the angelic legions, and the countless array of the ransomed, in harmonious order, and in resplendent glory; the church “prepared as a bride adorned for

her husband ;” and the Almighty God himself in the midst of them, to establish his throne on the sanctified earth, and make it the glorious capital of the universe—the place where he will thenceforth hold the court of heaven ! For a great voice was heard, saying, “ Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” He was spiritually and by symbols with the Israelites in the wilderness, but now he will dwell visibly and permanently with the *future Church*, in that true tabernacle, the pattern of which Moses was permitted to see in the mount. Then also will the types and ceremonies of the Jewish law be clearly understood, and the dealings of God with the Jews themselves likewise ; for their history has been a shadowing forth of the Christian dispensation ; and the promises which foretell their future glory are as lights shining in dark places to cheer the Church in its onward progress, until the glory of God be revealed on the earth, and “ the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it.”

To impress upon St. John and upon the Church the certainty of these things—the final blessedness of the faithful, and the changing of this earth into heaven—for wherever God dwells, *there* is heaven ; as the Psalmist says, “ In thy *presence* is fulness of joy, at thy *right hand* there are pleasures for evermore :”—to shew the certainty of this glorious consummation—He that sat upon the throne said unto John, “ *Write*, for these words are true and faithful.”

And the Church in former days *did* receive these sayings *literally* as true doctrines,—according to the evidence of many of the early Fathers. St. Augustine declares, that after the judgment, the new heaven and the new earth shall begin to be ; for by a mutation of things this world will pass away, not by an utter extinction—whence also the Apostle says (1 Cor. vii. 31,) “ the *fashion* of this world passeth away.” St. Barnabas says, the *eighth* thousand year of the world will be the beginning of a blessed eternity ; and Lactantius affirms, that then “ the world shall be renewed by God, and the heaven shall be folded up, and the earth shall be changed ; and God shall transform men into the similitude of angels, and they shall be

white as snow, and shall be always conversant in the sight of the Almighty, and shall sacrifice to their Lord, and shall serve him for ever."

This changing of earth into heaven seems also to be signified by that kingdom prepared for the righteous "from the foundation of the world." For the earth was originally formed in perfect beauty and unstained holiness; and man, created in the image of God, was appointed to rule over it as a king—to have dominion over every living thing that moved upon the earth, and to dwell in it as his everlasting habitation.

These purposes of the Almighty were seemingly frustrated by Satan's craft and man's disobedience. Hence arose that wondrous struggle between good and evil, between man's free will and the Spirit of God; that conflict between the powers of darkness and the Prince of life, in which the fate of the human race was involved, and perhaps the happiness and security of other worlds deeply affected. The struggle is still going on; but in its progress has been evolved the wondrous plan of redemption, and life and immortality have been brought to light; for the penalty of Adam's transgression has been paid by the Sinless One, the Lord from heaven; and all who sincerely believe this, though bearing the image of the earthly here, shall hereafter bear the image of the heavenly, and shall be restored to the full possession of all that Adam lost. "For God so loved the world," notwithstanding man's rebellion, "that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." At the end of the present dispensation the struggle will cease—the curse upon the earth will be removed—Paradise again will bloom in all its pristine beauty—and the tree of life for ever yield its fruits to the inhabitants of the holy Jerusalem.

Beneath its shadow sweet,
What joy when all shall meet,
Secure from loss and grief and pain;
There, by the river's brink,
To walk, and freely drink,
And never more to part again.

No winter's cold, or night,
Nor clouds to vail our sight,
Or changing seasons shall we know—
For glory, clear and bright,
From Christ our Life and Light,
Shall ever shine on all below.

Paradise will be more than restored to man. For then "there shall be no more *curse*," and death shall be swallowed up through the victory of Jesus; and the Serpent tempter, cast by him into the lake of fire, shall never again approach the abodes of the blessed. Thenceforward there will be no possibility of man falling from his allegiance. Eternal life and unfading glory are secured to all the servants of God by the promise of Him who hath all power in heaven and in earth.

The original purpose of God, therefore, in the creation of this world will not be frustrated; but eventually carried out with such a flood of glory and grandeur of comprehensiveness, as could never have been anticipated by the highest created intelligence, on that first Sabbath of the universe, "when the morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy."

The very Fall of man, with all its wondrous consequences, may have fixed the wavering fidelity, or secured the doubtful happiness, of other worlds; just as the fall of the Jews became the riches of the Gentiles"—and, as has been effected by Jesus "through the blood of his cross," *reconciling* (as St. Paul intimates) *all things unto himself*, whether things in earth or things in heaven." But these are things which we know only in part: even angels themselves are yet learning, through the Church, "the *manifold* wisdom of God."

Neither can we comprehend the nature or the extent of that blessedness which the glorified saints shall enjoy hereafter; for "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." They shall be made like unto the angels—they shall be like unto Jesus himself; and where he is they shall be also. His presence shall fill every heart with joy—and his hand bestow

upon each an eternal crown of glory. Man shall then be restored to the "*image of God*" in which he was originally created, and be clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. "They shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads." No dweller in the Paradise of God shall ever say he is sick, neither will the glorified body be subject to decay. The body shall be changed, like the bodies of Enoch and Elijah;—it will be raised incorruptible and spiritual, for our flesh and blood, in their present condition, cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

The hope of this blessedness has sustained and cheered the tried and persecuted servants of God in every age. The hope of this coming glory animated Job in the midst of all his calamities, and enabled him to exclaim with confidence, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me."

But the glorified saints, though kings and priests, shall have their happiness made perfect in the *service* of God. For "the throne of God and of the Lamb" shall be the glorious temple of the New Jerusalem; and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face." Of the felicity implied in these few words we can form no adequate idea. But if the Queen of Sheba could say of Solomon's attendants, "Happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom,"—how infinitely greater will be the happiness of those who stand before "a greater than Solomon," and serve "the only *wise God* our Saviour."

Among those who *serve* are the "kings of the earth," who shall bring their honour and glory into the holy city. By this we may understand, that there will be different degrees of rank, of authority, and of glory, among the perfected saints—even "as one star differeth from another star in glory." The "kings" here referred to, may denote those distinguished believers, who had part in the first resurrection—more especially the Old Testament worthies, and those faithful servants, who, while on earth, diligently em-

ployed the various talents with which they were entrusted, and were appointed accordingly to rule, some over five, and others over ten cities.

To have the privilege of entering that holy city, the New Jerusalem,—of which St. John has given such a glorious description,—to tread on its golden pavement—to walk in its unfading light—to talk with its angel-guards—to gaze upon its splendid beauty—and to partake of the fruits of the tree of life, on the banks of the crystal river,—will constitute no small portion of the happiness of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of Life. *Thither*, we are taught to believe, will be continually resorting the nations of the saved from earth's remotest bounds—to behold the presence of the Lord, and to worship before him: to see, without a veil, the brightness of his glory,—that exceeding glory of God and of the Lamb, before which the light of the sun and of the moon will disappear, even as the stars now vanish before the light of day. This glory will lighten the holy city, as the pillar of fire in the wilderness threw its light over the whole camp of Israel, and rendered darkness impossible within its boundaries. To the splendour of this light—to Jehovah's glorious throne, “the redeemed of the Lord shall come with singing; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.”—(Isaiah li. 11.)

“Before the Three in One
 They all exulting stand,
 And tell the wonders he hath done,
 Through all their land:
 The listening spheres attend
 And swell the growing fame;
 And sing in songs which never end
 The wondrous Name.
 The whole triumphant host
 Give thanks to God on high:
 “Hail Father, Son and Holy Ghost,”
 They ever cry.

So overpowered was St. John by the glorious vision exhibited before him, that “he fell down to worship at the feet of the angel,

which shewed him these things." Nor can we greatly wonder at it, notwithstanding he had been already reprov'd for the same weakness.

Let us consider the actual condition of the Apostle, and the nature of the revelations with which he had been favoured.

He was then "*in tribulation*,"—had been banished to the Isle of Patmos, "for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." The Church was suffering persecution; and the scroll of her future history, as it had been gradually unrolled before him, seemed to be filled with lamentation, mourning and woe. He saw in vision her terrible oppressors—the Dragon and the Beast—her spiritual and temporal foes, trying her faith and patience, trampling her in the dust, pouring out her blood like water, triumphing in her fall, and rejoicing in her death. But the scene soon changes. The Apostle witnesses her unexpected revival—her renewed struggles with her ancient antagonists, her partial deliverance, and her growing strength. Again the enemy prepares to overwhelm the Church, by a powerful and furious onset: but he fails in the attempt, and the Alleluias of the heavenly host announce the glorious result. Then it is that St. John falls at the feet of the attendant angel who declares to him these "true sayings of God."

The Church, however, had not attained her final rest: there was indeed a millennium of blessedness, but it is followed by a world-wide apostasy; and then another and final attempt is made by the Dragon to destroy the camp of the saints. St. John beholds this last and desperate struggle repressed by the outstretched arm of the Almighty:—fire from heaven destroys every foe. Satan is cast into the burning lake, with all whose names are not written in the book of life.

Delivered from the Dragon and the Beast, the Church now enters on a state of everlasting peace and felicity. This is depicted by the New Jerusalem which St. John sees descending from heaven to the earth. He beholds its resplendent walls and golden streets—he reads, on its gem-like foundations, and on its pearly gates, the names of the tribes of Israel, and of the twelve Apostles of the

Lamb (his *own name* shining among the glorious inscriptions)—shewing the union and communion of Jews and Gentiles—of the Church of the Old Testament and of the New. Above all, he sees in the city the throne of God and of the Lamb; while the blessed inhabitants—blessed beyond Adam in Paradise—walk in and out, enjoying the light of Jehovah's countenance, seeing his face, and reigning in perfect holiness and unalloyed happiness, for ever and ever.

This transcendent consummation, passing before the eyes of the Apostle, dazzled his imagination and overpowered his senses; and so filled him with holy reverence and admiration, that he again forgot the subordinate character of his glorious conductor, and gave vent to his ecstatic feelings by falling down to worship at his feet. Proving to us that mere flesh and blood is not fit to inherit the kingdom of heaven. He was gently reproved by the benignant angel; and reminded that he ought to worship God only.

But the angel, in addition, gave him a command which is interesting to us, and to every reader of the word of God: "Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand."

There are some who speak of the Apocalypse, even *now*, as a sealed book, and discourage every effort made to elucidate its meaning. Such was not the declaration of the angel, neither is it according to the mind of Jesus. He sent his angel to testify these things to the seven Churches of Asia, and to all the Churches; and to "shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done:"—that they might be prepared for each event as it came to pass.

"The time was at hand" eighteen hundred years ago, for the fulfilment of the earliest of the revelations of this book; and the time has been at hand ever since, for the development, in the history of the Church and of the world, of one after another of the significant visions and symbols with which the Apocalypse abounds.

In attempting to expound the opening of the Seals, the sounding of the Trumpets, and the out-pouring of the Vials, we have found, in history, a succession of events wonderfully coinciding with the succession of the symbolical predictions—and fully justifying the

repetition of the admonition, in every age of the Church, "Seal not the book; for the time is at hand."

The closing visions of Daniel were to be *sealed up* "till the time of the end." Their fulfilment to the Jews would not take place till a far distant era. Not so the prophecies of St. John; the Christian Church has ever been deeply interested in them, and has felt their importance in each successive phase of her history.

But there are many who, though denying that the "time *was* at hand" when the angel addressed St. John, are beginning to believe that the time is *now* at hand, when the whole of the revelation of God will be fulfilled. The events of the present day are forcing conviction on the mind even of the worldly and the careless, of the insecurity of long established institutions, and that a great change is coming over the earth—that unprecedented convulsions are at hand, which will shake the world to its centre. But those who have the testimony of Jesus need not fear. We know who is the Governor among the nations, and who hath *promised* yet once more to shake not the earth only, but also the heaven—that he may remove the things that are shaken, and establish a kingdom which shall abide for ever.—(Heb. xii.) "The time *is* at hand"—"the things *must* shortly be done." We are fast approaching the verge of the period, distinctly marked in prophecy, as the termination of the reign of Antichrist and of the prevalence of iniquity. We now begin to count the years which intervene—just as we count the days between the present moment and the coming new year.* With what feelings do we contemplate the approach of that momentous period—that beginning of the end; when the faith and patience of the saints may again, for the last time, be sorely tried. Behold, saith Jesus, "I come quickly; blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book." And, in this *book*, what saith our Lord? He admonishes us to watch, to keep our garments, to keep the faith, to keep the word of his patience: and then he promises to each believer, as well as to the Church of Philadelphia, "I also will

* This Lecture was delivered on the 21st December, 1853.

keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”—“Hold fast that which thou hast (saith Jesus), that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out, and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from God; and I will write upon him my new name.”

In this season of the year we commemorate with joyful hearts the first advent of our Lord, and are now ready to join in the song of the angels—“Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will toward men.” But his first coming was only the commencement of that great work of Salvation, which is fast hastening to its close:—and yet, for the second coming, which shall usher in that glorious consummation—when man shall be restored to the image of his Maker, and have right to eat of the Tree of Life in the garden of Eden—how few can join in the aspiration, “Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly”?

It is because our faith is weak, and our perceptions of heavenly blessedness are dim—the things of time and sense hedge us about, and we walk as in a cloudy atmosphere, so that seldom can we obtain a clear view of the glories of the New Jerusalem. Neither are we careful to search diligently concerning those things which shall be revealed hereafter; although we are told that even the angels desire to learn them through the Church—and they must have learnt much while attending the Apostle throughout the wonderful scenes of the Apocalypse.

But to quicken our spiritual perceptions, and to help us to fix our attention more steadily on “the words of the prophecy of this book,” our merciful and gracious Lord often rouses us by his Spirit, and his providence, and his warning word—by sending forth his judgments on the nations around us, or by laying his chastening hand on our family circle. He teaches us, by trials and afflictions, by pain of body and by grief of mind, that this world is *not our rest*; that we are here only as pilgrims and strangers; and that we must

arise and seek the rest that remaineth for the people of God, in that happy land where there is "no more death, neither sorrow nor crying."

In the very close of the Revelation, the "great voice as of a trumpet," which John heard in the beginning, is again heard, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." The glorious Head of the Church, clothed in awful Majesty, and having all power in heaven and earth, now speaks in tones of gracious encouragement and of solemn admonition, to all the professing members of the Church: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."—"And the Spirit and the bride, say, Come; and let him that heareth, say, Come; and let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

May every heart respond to the invitation, and every voice join in the prayer:—"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"

"O form us all, while we remain
On earth, unto thy praise;
That each one fully may obtain
Thy blessed aim through grace;
Till we in heaven thy face shall see,
May spirit, soul, and body be
Preserved by thee against that day,
Blameless, O Lord, we pray."

THE END.

